# DOCUMENT RESUME

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| ED 218 171 | | SO 014 087 |

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|---|---|
| TITLE | Education and Change in South Australia. Final Report. |
| INSTITUTION | Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, Adelaide. |
| REPORT NO | ISBN-0-7243-4551-5 |
| PUB DATE | Jan 82 |
| NOTE | 345p.; For a related document, see SO 014 086. Some pages contain light print type. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Comparative Education; Curriculum Development; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; Futures (of Society); Higher Education; Special Education; Student Evaluation; Teacher Education; Teacher Improvement; Technical Education; Technological Advancement |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Australia (South Australia) |

ABSTRACT

This publication contains the final report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, the major task of which was to examine and make recommendations to the Minister of Education on the educational system of South Australia. The report begins with a summary of recommendations. Following this summary, there is a discussion of and commentary on the committee's first report. For the most part, the final report discusses topics additional to the ones examined in the first report. However, it also includes a further consideration of topics covered in the first report where it was felt that further comment was necessary. The remainder of the publication focuses on the following topics: the school curriculum; curriculum development in the schools; education and technological change; children and their schools; the secondary school curriculum; the curriculum of the upper secondary school; the future of technical and further education; the education of special groups; student evaluation; the evaluation of schools; the evaluation of the educational system; raising the quality of the teaching service; conditions in the teaching service; the use of limited resources; and a time for change. (RM)

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# EDUCATION AND CHANGE

# IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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## FINAL REPORT

COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY INTO EDUCATION
IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JANUARY 1982

SO 014 087

**COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY INTO EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA**
**(Dr. J. P. KEEVES, Chairman)**

**31 Flinders Street,**
**Adelaide, S.A. 5000**

15th January, 1982

The Hon. Harold Allison, M.P.,
Minister of Education,
Parliament House,
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Minister,

We have the honour to present to you the final report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia.

The first report, presented in February 1981, dealt mainly with the first three of five Terms of Reference. The present report primarily deals with the remaining Terms of Reference but also includes a further consideration of matters falling within the first three Terms of Reference where it was felt that further comment was necessary.

The Committee was impressed by the large number of South Australians who have a keen interest in the quality of education in this State, and who made submissions and representations to the Committee. All such submissions and representations were considered by the Committee, and although some of the matters brought before us are not canvassed in any depth in this report they proved to be invaluable information in piecing together an overall perception and understanding of the education system as a background against which we formed our final opinions and recommendations.

We hope that this report, taken in conjunction with our first report, will prove to be a useful basis for the planning and management of education in South Australia in the 1980s.

Yours sincerely,

JP. Keeves. J.P. Keeves, Chairman

P.D. Agars

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W.J. Menz

I.S. Wilson

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## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### CHAPTER 3 : THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

R3.1 The staffs of central administration and the regional offices should provide strong leadership and guidance to the schools in curriculum matters. 28

R3.2 A curriculum area concerned with "moral reasoning and action, value and belief systems" should be introduced into schools to rectify the omission of this area in the *Into the 80s* statement. 31

R3.3 A curriculum area concerned with "health and physical education" should be introduced into schools to rectify the partial omission of this area in the *Into the 80s* statement. 32

### CHAPTER 4 : CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

R4.1 The Education Department should be responsible for the preparation of *recommended* curricula and curriculum materials which would be used by schools within the Department unless approval was given for the use of appropriate alternatives. 45

R4.2 (a) The curricula of each school should be reviewed on a regular basis.

(b) During a review the curriculum records of the school should be examined and, where appropriate, approval recommended for the continued use of the curriculum program of the school to the Regional Director who would authorize approval on behalf of the Director-General of Education.

(c) Where the school chose to replace a *recommended* curriculum with a course developed within the school, such a course would be granted *interim* approval by the School Council and Principal of the school and copies of all curriculum documents would be lodged with the Regional Director.

(d) At the time of a review of the school the review panel would examine the curriculum documents for which interim approval had been given and would, where considered appropriate, recommend approval of such curricula to the Regional Director who would authorize approval on behalf of the Director-General of Education. 45

R4.3 Curriculum Committees should be set up in each of the eight specified curriculum areas with two additional Committees in the areas of Junior Primary Education and Primary Education. Each of the specified Committees would be responsible for the development and review of curricula in its specific area, and the Junior Primary Education Committee and the Primary Education Committee would be responsible for the development of a co-ordinated and integrated program across the eight curriculum areas. 47

R4.4 (a) Within the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation, between four and ten curriculum development project teams could be established at any one time, depending on the resources available, to undertake specific and planned tasks of curriculum development in the ten curriculum areas specified above.

(b) The Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should initiate jointly with other Austraian States specific and planned tasks of curriculum development. 48

R4.5 (a) A network of Regional Curriculum Conferences should be established in each of the 10 currently proposed curriculum areas and in each of the 10 regions to maintain a two-way flow of information and materials between the central Curriculum Committees and the schools.

(b) Where information and materials from curriculum development programs within the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation are to be implemented within the schools, appropriate inservice education activities should be set up within the regions which would be planned and co-ordinated by the Regional Curriculum Conferences.

(c) Regional Conferences would, when required, establish Working Parties to give consideration to particular issues.

(d) The needs of the schools for curriculum change should be identified and debated by the Regional Curriculum Conferences and their Working Parties and the information obtained in this way should be communicated to the central Curriculum Committees. 51

R4.6 (a) A thorough re-examination should be undertaken of the purposes and functions of each branch, centre, unit and special group within the Curriculum Directorate with a view to relocating the staff and many of the functions performed by these bodies within regional offices and possibly re-establishing some as schools within a region.

(b) The remaining and restructured branches, centres, units and special groups should form a Regional Services Division that would be linked as closely as is possible with the regional directorates that they serve.

(c) The Regional Services Division should be responsible to the Deputy Director-General (Schools) and the administrative head of the Division should ultimately be appointed at the level of assistant director, equivalent in status to colleagues - the Directors of the Regional Directorates. 53

R4.7 (a) Detailed program costs should be identified for the branches and units within the Regional Services Division.

(b) Procedures should be devised by which both government and non-government schools engaging the services of these Regional Services Units would be required to pay for the use of these services.

(c) Government schools should be provided with a notional sum that would enable them to purchase the services of the Regional Services Units.

(d) The level of charges for services and grants made to schools should be set at a level that would ensure that there was a clear recognition of the costs of such services, so that ineffective and inefficient service provision would gradually be eliminated. 54

R4.8 The Directorate of Research and Planning should be dis-established and the staff and functions of the Planning Section should be transferred to the Directorate of Educational Facilities and where appropriate the staff of the Research Section should be transferred to the new Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation. 56

R4.9 (a) Its former recommendation to establish an Advisory Council of Education should be not implemented for a period of five years and that further consideration be given, after other changes have been introduced, to the need that the Minister might have for the advice that such a Council might provide.

(b) The Advisory Curriculum Board should be reformed for a limited period of time with strong community representation, and with an independent chairman to provide advice to the Director-General of Education on curriculum matters and for the consideration of further papers relating to the Into the 80s statement, and if after a period of three years the Board was still not serving a useful purpose and functioning effectively, it should be disbanded.

(c) All members of advisory bodies should be adequately recompensed for their services. 59

CHAPTER 5 : EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

R5.1 (a) Funds should be made available to the Special Education section of the Education Department for a three-year period, with the possibility of renewal for a further period of three years, for the development of relatively inexpensive electronic and technological aids for use in special education programs, and that the use of school workshops should continue to be permitted for the purpose of manufacture of such equipment.

(b) The Special Education section should investigate equipment being developed in Australia and overseas that would facilitate the provision of educational programs for the disabled, and that consideration should continue to be given to the need for and the educational value of such equipment that might be purchased for use in South Australian schools.

(c) Where new equipment is developed its commercial potential should be fully explored for the benefit of a wider community and the income used to support further development. 69

R5.2 (a) The Educational Technology Centre should be funded for a three-year period for further developmental work to be undertaken into the application of new technologies including the use of the national communications satellite and other communications systems to provide an open-access system of education for students of both the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education in remote areas; and a detailed proposal should be prepared to cover the staff and contingency costs for a developmental investigation that would enable some of the costs of such work to be sought from sources outside the State.

(b) One member of staff should be seconded from each of the Correspondence School of the Education Department and of the Open College of the Department of Technical and Further Education to join the project team for the investigation proposed above.

(c) A person with expertise in evaluation should be funded to undertake an independent evaluation of the investigation.

(d) The investigation should be reviewed by a national panel at the end of the period of three years to determine the rate at which further work on the project should be undertaken and the value of the work undertaken for education in other parts of Australia. 70

R5.3 (a) The Educational Technology Centre should be funded for a three-year period to investigate, in the first instance, the feasibility of establishing a videographic storage and retrieval system to the 10 regional offices and the 700 schools of the South Australian Education Department.

(b) At the end of the three-year period the investigation should be reviewed by a panel drawn from the Office of the Ministry of Education, the State Treasury and the Public Service Board to examine the value of the work undertaken for the administration of education in South Australia, as well as for other government departments within the State, including the Department of Technical and Further Education. 71

R5.4 (a) $250,000 should be made available in each of three years to support curriculum development programs directed towards incorporating modern technology into the courses conducted within the colleges.

(b) $250,000 should be made available in each of three years to support the purchase of micro-electronic and information processing equipment for use in colleges in instructional programs.

(c) Colleges of technical and further education should be invited to make application for funding to undertake programs of curriculum development and the purchase of new equipment, and procedures should be developed for the disbursement of the moneys available, in a manner that would be consistent with proposals for program administration within the Department of Technical and Further Education.

(d) After a period of three years an evaluation of this supplementary funding should be undertaken by a small panel of independent assessors to determine whether or not this program should be continued in the recommended form, and if modifications to the program appear necessary and desirable to recommend such modifications prior to the program continuing for a further period of three years. 74

R5.5 (a) Colleges of advanced education in their courses of teacher education and in their post-graduate diplomas in educational technology should give consideration to the inclusion of segments associated with the introduction of new technology, to meet the needs of lecturers in colleges of technical and further education.

(b) Colleges of technical and further education, that introduce new technological equipment and curricula, should recognize their obligation to disseminate information on technological developments both to their colleagues in other colleges, and to commerce and industry through the conducting of short awareness courses, for which all attending would pay fees to support the running of the courses. 75

R5.6 The attention of all who are responsible for advising students at the upper secondary and tertiary levels should be drawn to the career opportunities that are likely to exist for girls as well as boys in the future in fields associated with the introduction of new technology, such as those involving micro-electronic and information processing technology. 76

## CHAPTER 6 : CHILDREN AND THEIR SCHOOLS

R6.1 (a) In every primary school on-going programs should be established to identify children who have not achieved or are not achieving mastery of the basic skills, and to provide the necessary instruction to assist these children to cross the threshold of basic learning.

(b) The Education Department should develop procedures for providing adequate teaching staff to those schools that have significant numbers of students with learning problems to ensure that appropriate remedial education programs are established to diagnose learning problems and to help students to overcome them. 80

R6.2 Recommended courses of instruction should be developed in the four areas of fundamental learning - language, science, mathematics and social learning - for use in the junior primary and primary grades and that these courses be made available as soon as is practicable to all schools. 82

R6.3 Recommended courses of instruction should be developed comprising statements of general aims, curriculum objectives and specified organization and content in the four curriculum areas of health and physical education, moral reasoning and action, arts and crafts, and work, leisure and life skills; and if a school chose not to use a recommended course or to use such a course only in part, it would need to obtain approval for the course used within the school. 83

R6.4 The Primary School Curriculum Committee should prepare curriculum guidelines on the recommended time allocation across the eight areas of the curriculum, on recommended minimum time levels for areas associated with the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and on principles and procedures for the integration of the parts of the curriculum into a whole. 83

R6.5 (a) Where appropriate in the administration of primary schools the distinctions between junior primary and primary sections should be maintained, since it is important that the less formal activity procedures that are currently used in junior primary classrooms should not gradually disappear.

(b) The preparation of teachers, while permitting student teachers to develop competence over the whole of the primary field, should continue to make allowance for specialization at the junior primary or primary school levels.

(c) A Junior Primary Curriculum Committee should be established to ensure that full consideration is given to the curricular needs and teaching methods that are appropriate across school Years R to 2. 84

R6.6 (a) The curricula of the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Grades should be re-examined and if necessary redeveloped.

(b) The spending of three years at the junior primary stage of schooling should become the normal practice, for children in government schools.

(c) In exceptional circumstances a child could spend less than three years at the junior primary stage of schooling, and that in excess of three years should be permitted for some children.

(d) The curriculum of successive stages of schooling should be restructured to permit a gradual raising of standards for all students.

(e) During the period required to implement at successive stages the proposed policies, students not coping adequately with schooling at all year levels should be encouraged to repeat a grade. 94

R6.7 (a) Greater emphasis should be given in primary schools to the development and use of reference skills that would in future permit more effective use to be made of information made available through the introduction of new technology.

(b) Training should be given in primary schools to develop skills in the use of the keyboard.

(c) The teaching of calculation using electronic calculators should be included in the mathematics curriculum at the primary school level, with emphasis given to the development of procedures for approximation and verification of computations undertaken on a calculator.

(d) In the mathematics curriculum an emphasis should be placed on procedures associated with the solving of simple problems including those that would permit the solution of such problems to be carried out on a small computer. 95

## CHAPTER 7 : THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

R7.1 (a) The secondary school curriculum should give recognition to the four areas of foundation learning - language, science, mathematics and social learning.

(b) Recommended curricula should be developed for use in schools in the four areas of foundation learning.

(c) Greater flexibility should be introduced into the timetable of the secondary school to permit small units of instruction to be presented, that would provide options for students to study minor courses occupying less than six periods a week for a few weeks, a term or a half year. 101

R7.2 (a) A Working Party should be established to examine the place of modern languages in the curriculum of secondary schools.

(b) The Working Party should undertake the development of curriculum guidelines, statements of objectives and tests to assess stages of learning for the teaching of the different modern languages.

(c) Consideration should be given to the conducting of inservice programs to implement the changes proposed in the teaching of modern languages. 112

R7.3 (a) Approximately two-thirds of the time available for learning in schools should be given to learning in the four curriculum areas of foundation learning in language, science, mathematics and social learning.

(b) The time allocated to the four curriculum areas of foundation learning should be assigned equally to the four areas, unless students have a particular need for additional time to be given to one specific area.

(c) As is consistent with the above time allocations, curricula which are integrated across the four areas of foundation learning may be developed to meet particular needs and circumstances. 114

R7.4 (a) Homework should be set regularly in the four areas of foundation learning of language, science, mathematics and social learning.

(b) Parents should provide good working conditions for students to study in their homes, and parents should supervise and encourage home study.

(c) Teachers should examine and correct the homework done within the classroom as soon as possible after the work was set. 114

R7.5 (a) The secondary school curriculum should give recognition to the four areas of experiential learning - moral reasoning and action; work, leisure and lifestyle; arts and crafts; and health and physical education.

(b) Approximately one-third of the time available for learning in schools should be given to learning in the four curriculum areas of experiential learning.

(c) Recommended curricula should be developed after a trial period of three years for courses in the four curriculum areas of experiential learning. 120

## CHAPTER 8 : THE CURRICULUM OF THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

R8.1 Commerce and business studies subjects should be provided at Year 12 level as tertiary entry subjects by the reconstituted Public Examinations Board of South Australia. 131

R8.2 (a) $500,000 should be made available each year for the next three years, with a projected extension for a further period of three years in order to promote the development of computer services primarily in secondary schools, including the purchase of appropriate hardware and software by at least one school in each of 10 regions.

(b) The Angle Park Computing Centre should be maintained and strengthened in its capacity to develop advisory services to schools throughout the State, including the non-government schools.

(c) New proposals should be advanced for the use and co-ordination of computing services provided for schools including the expenditure of moneys to be made available for developmental purposes to prevent the establishment of a disjointed collection of activities arising in the field of computing in schools. 141

R8.3 (a) The Education Department should develop proposals for the rationalization of existing courses in schools at the Year 11 and 12 levels, and for the reallocation of resources to the promotion of alternative programs that would be seen by students to be more relevant to their needs and interests.

(b) The reconstituted Public Examinations Board should serve the needs of the whole of the Year 12 student group and not just the interests of those students who are preparing to enter institutions of higher education. 143

## CHAPTER 9 : THE FUTURE OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

R9.1 A Technical and Further Education Advisory Committee should be established for a trial period of three years as a relatively small group with a Chairman appointed from outside the Department of Technical and Further Education. 147

R9.2 The Department of Technical and Further Education should actively foster the establishment of co-ordinating mechanisms within regions either through the forming of co-ordinating committees between colleges or through the amalgamation of smaller colleges into a larger and more viable unit. 147

R9.3 A Working Party should be established by the Minister of Education to consider the tasks required of the Department, its multiplicity of links with State and Commonwealth bodies, and how the Department might function more effectively. 148

R9.4
(a) A program approach should be adopted for the administration and planning of courses in the Department of Technical and Further Education.
(b) A Program Manager should be appointed from within the colleges of the Department of Technical and Further Education, and a Program Administrator should be appointed from within the central office of the Department for each major program area.
(c) Statements of input and output from courses should be published annually to show both the numbers of trained persons being produced by each program, together with an assessment of the effectiveness of each program in meeting the State's needs. 150

R9.5 The Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia should develop procedures to ensure that all courses approved and accredited under its authority should be portable between levels of education in South Australia and between institutions of technical and further education across Australia. 151

R9.6 A detailed plan should be prepared by the Department of Technical and Further Education showing the proposed output of the Department in relation to the estimated needs of the State, together with supporting statements on the strategies being advanced to produce the specified output. 151

R9.7 (a) Metropolitan colleges and, where there is sufficient demand, the non-metropolitan colleges of technical and further education should be required to establish programs in the area of secretarial and business studies that employ the new micro-electronic technology and the information processing technology.

(b) The programs established should include both full-time and part-time courses. 154

R9.8 Colleges of technical and further education, particularly those in non-metropolitan regions, should seek actively to find ways in which collaboration with both colleges of advanced education and with schools might be fostered to provide a more effective range of services to both youth and adults in the region. 156

R9.9 (a) Annual teaching output targets should be specified for each college in units of student hours on the basis of defined teaching contact hours per annum for each classification of full-time lecturer and defined class sizes for appropriate categories of courses as applied to the approved staffing and educational program of a college.

(b) Colleges annually should make a submission to the Department of Technical and Further Education incorporating proposed educational programs for the ensuing year in terms of courses, anticipated enrolments and any special projects together with a review of performance against targets in the previous year.

(c) The Department of Technical and Further Education should consider annual college program proposals and by suitable adjustment and aggregation prepare an annual state-wide program proposal, together with associated staffing and salary costs and a review of previous performance against approved state-wide programs and targets, for approval by the Minister of Education before the Department approves college programs and staffing allocation. 164

R9.10 (a) The Open College of Further Education (including the Adult Literacy Unit) and the Adelaide College of Further Education should be amalgamated, together with the Training and Development Branch on a site within the City of Adelaide.

(b) Resources should be made available to enable the new college to undertake developmental work in the application of new technology for instructional purposes for use both by the Open College and the Adelaide College.

(c) Over the next decade the new college should become the centre for piloting the use of new technological developments for instructional purposes in technical and further education and that a small unit should be established for this purpose. 166

## CHAPTER 10 : THE EDUCATION OF SPECIAL GROUPS

R10.1 (a) A sub-region of educational administration should be established in the northwest of the State of South Australia, with an appointment made at the Principal Education Officer level of a person to co-ordinate the provision of all educational services to the Aboriginal people living in the area including those services provided by the Education Department, and the Department of Technical and Further Education.

(b) A Sub-Regional Education Council of the Aboriginal people of the area should be established to advise on the conduct and co-ordination of educational activities in the sub-region of the northwest of the State.

(c) Where possible the co-ordination should be undertaken of the educational programs of the South Australian Government and the Commonwealth Government in the northwest of the State and surrounding areas. 171

R10.2 More flexible training programs, conditions of appointment and of promotion to positions of responsibility in the teaching services of the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education should be established to enable Aboriginals to work in Aboriginal schools. 172

R10.3 (a) Allowance should be made in staffing formulae to provide increased staffing ratios for schools that have more than ten Aboriginal students.

(b) Current programs for Aboriginal students should be maintained at full strength and that changes in the balance of State and Commonwealth responsibility should not lead to a reduction in the financial resources available for such programs. 173

R10.4 (a) Girls should be encouraged by parents, teachers and career advisers to undertake the study of subjects at school, such as the physical sciences, mathematics and the new technologies that will increase the range of courses available to them at the post-secondary school level and thus to increase the employment and career opportunities which they might follow on completion of their initial education.

(b) Boys should not be discouraged from developing their skills in the learning of languages and the humanities that will serve to increase the range of career options available to them, particularly in the expanding areas of commerce, tourism and industry. 175

R10.5 (a) Every primary school should develop strategies for the identification of gifted and talented children and for the provision of a wide range of challenging activities, including access to and use of a micro-computer, to extend such able students.

(b) Every secondary school should where possible and appropriate provide for the setting of students in the subjects of English, foreign languages and mathematics so that students might be taught to their level of ability and the more able provided with extended and accelerated programs.

(c) The current policies of providing special interest music high schools and language high schools should be extended to provide at the upper secondary school level a technological high school that would include the provision of courses for more able students in the fields of mathematics, the physical sciences, computing, electronics and other areas of technology. 177

R10.6 (a) Policies for the integration of handicapped children into normal schooling programs should be pursued wherever possible.

(b) Practices of locating special schools for both physically and mentally handicapped children in multicampus schools or adjacent to normal schools should be maintained, and extended, particularly in situations where facilities in schools are under-utilized as a consequence of declining enrolments.

(c) Teachers working with handicapped children in their classrooms should have, wherever possible, adequate professional preparation for such work.

(d) Support personnel working with handicapped children should be required to have training in meeting the needs of students with handicaps. 178

R10.7 Colleges of technical and further education should provide access and instructional facilities for physically handicapped students to enable them to participate as fully as possible in the programs of the colleges. 179

## CHAPTER 11 : STUDENT EVALUATION

R11.1 (a) The universities and colleges of advanced education in South Australia should be asked jointly by the Education Department and the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia, to examine critically their courses of teacher education and to increase the emphasis given to evaluation and to educational measurement in teacher education programs through a systematic study of these areas.

(b) In the restructured Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation a separate unit should be established for a trial period of five years to undertake programs associated with the evaluation of student performance as well as developmental work associated with the evaluation of school curricula. 182

R11.2 (a) In the assessment of students in schools and colleges and at all grade levels, greater consideration should be given to the use of practical tasks for determining whether or not a student has mastered certain skills and learnt from the experiences provided.

(b) In the assessment of student learning in schools and colleges, greater consideration should be given to whether or not a student has mastered specific skills through the use of procedures that involve the identification of the required tasks and the level of performance necessary, both in terms of the criteria of successful performance, and the proportion of tasks successfully performed to be considered appropriate for mastery. 184

R11.3 A greater variety of evaluation procedures should be introduced into classroom use, including checklists and observation schedules in order to increase the range of skills being assessed and the learning experiences provided. 185

R11.4 (a) Schools should be encouraged to conduct each year a testing program in the areas of the essential skills of literacy, numeracy, oracy, reference, problem solving and investigation at the Year 5 and Year 9 levels, and the decision as to whether a school should conduct a testing program or adopt alternative methods of evaluation should be taken by the School Council.

(b) Appropriate tests should be made available to schools for this purpose, but that it should not be obligatory for a school to test in all essential skill areas.

(c) As soon as possible after testing, information on student performance should be made available to students and their parents, but not in a form that could be used in later years by employers, and the manner in which a school reports to its students and their parents should be determined by the School Council.

(d) Every four years data on a sample of students from a sample of schools should be obtained to provide evidence on the performance of students at Year 5 and Year 9 levels within the State. 187

R11.5 The unit concerned with evaluation in the newly formed Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should be required to undertake developmental work in the areas of diagnostic testing and item banking and to disseminate information on both developments in these areas and the materials available to teachers and schools. 191

## CHAPTER 12 : THE EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS

R12.1 The major focus of the teacher and lecturer development programs in South Australian schools and colleges should be directed towards school and college improvement for at least a period of five years. 195

R12.2 (a) The Education Department should establish a special unit within the Educational Facilities Directorate that would be responsible for the administration of all special purpose resource and activities programs including the moneys coming from the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the Capital Works Assistance Scheme, and the rationalization of the additional facilities held by schools as a result of declining enrolments.

(b) The Education Department should establish a small unit within the Personnel Directorate that would be responsible for the allocation of all staff above formula, normally included in the negotiable component of staffing.

(c) Regional Offices should submit with assigned priorities all claims for additional staffing and resources to these two units, that would determine the allocation of staffing and resources according to agreed policies.

(d) Standard procedures should be developed that would be employed by all schools to report annually on the use of the additional support that they had received as staff or other resources, and on the effectiveness of the programs conducted with the additional support.

(e) Consideration should be given to the inclusion of the non-government schools in certain programs associated with the allocation of additional resources, with a representative from the non-government sector involved in determining the allocation of grants. 200

R12.3 The Education Department should give consideration to providing a special supplementary fund administered by the unit within the Educational Facilities Directorate to permit and encourage schools to undertake projects involving educational change and innovation that were directed towards school improvement and curriculum development. 201

R12.4 (a) A program of prospective review of schools should be introduced.

(b) Training should be provided for staff in promotion positions to enable schools to participate effectively in such a program of review.

(c) The proposals for review advanced for schools should be applied to all institutions in the education sector. 205

## CHAPTER 13 : THE EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

R13.1 At least every ten years provision should be made for a thorough evaluative review of the educational system at all levels, early childhood, schooling, technical and further education and higher education and that the report of the review should be made public on its completion. 207

R13.2 (a) A program built around a four-year cycle for monitoring performance in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy should be established on a continuing basis, with testing in one of the four areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and numeration being conducted each year, and reported at successive four-year intervals.

(b) Information should be collected on the sex, age, grade, school location, father's and mother's occupation, ethnicity, race, language spoken in the home and known specific learning difficulties of the students so that information on the performance of subgroups of interest could be reported.

(c) Within the State an advisory group of curriculum specialists should be established who would examine the results of each testing program and report on the implications of the findings for educational practice within the State.

(d) Both the report of the study and the report by the advisory group of curriculum specialists should be published and made public information. 212

R13.3 Curriculum and teaching probe studies should be undertaken every 10 years in the areas of fundamental learning associated with language, mathematics, science and social learning. 215

R13.4 Periodic national surveys should be conducted in areas of technical knowledge and skill to assess the adequacy of the Technical and Further Education training programs being provided to meet national needs. 216

R13.5 Efforts should be continued in the development of appropriate systems of program performance budgeting, and that basic systems should be subsequently revised and retested in the anticipation and hope that at some time in the future the education system might be accountable in greater detail for the money that it spends and that some of the money it receives might be put to more effective use. 217

## CHAPTER 14 : RAISING THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING SERVICE

R14.1 (a) All private colleges operating at the post-secondary level should be registered with the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia.

(b) All private colleges operating at the post-secondary level should be required to employ properly qualified and competent staff as a condition of their registration. 221

R14.2 All staff of the Department of Technical and Further Education, engaged in conducting courses on behalf of schools and for students enrolled in primary and secondary schools, should be required to hold restricted registration with the Teachers Registration Board. 222

R14.3 The conditions of recreation leave of lecturing staff in colleges of technical and further education should be renegotiated to make formal provision in the working year for the undertaking of specified programs of staff development, industrial experience and, in particular, familiarization with new technological developments. 224

R14.4 The Education Department should determine minimum standards of competence in mathematics to be required of those who will in future be employed to teach at the junior primary and primary school levels, in order to guarantee a gradual increase in the quality of the teaching of mathematics at these levels. 226

R14.5 The Education Department in collaboration with the tertiary education institutions should undertake systematic planning to ensure an adequate supply of specialist teachers in all subject areas, but particularly in mathematics and the physical sciences, to work in the secondary schools. 227

R14.6 The Teachers Registration Board should develop guidelines for schools to ensure that all beginning teachers experience an effective induction program prior to assessment for conversion of their status of provisional registration to full registration, and that only those who are assessed to be competent by their employer be classified as fully registered. 229

## CHAPTER 15 : CONDITIONS IN THE TEACHING SERVICE

R15.1
(a) The promotion structure of the teaching service at both primary and secondary school levels should be changed significantly to create new types of promotion positions, particularly at the primary school level.
(b) Procedures employed in the appointment of teachers to promotion positions should be substantially modified to allow for both local specification of positions and local selection of persons to fill those positions to ensure that appropriate appointments are made.
(c) Limited tenure appointments should be made to promotion positions.

(d) Holding positions should be specified that teaching staff who have formerly occupied a specific position in a school should revert to when the position that they hold becomes redundant, or when their period of limited tenure to a promotion position expires.

(e) Procedures should be developed that permit women to be eligible for promotion without the condition of unbroken service.

(f) Consideration should be given to ways of encouraging more women to accept positions of management and responsibility within the educational service not only in schools, but also in the administrative area. 237

R15.2 (a) The Education Act and Further Education Acts should be amended to secure the abolition of the Teachers Salaries Board.

(b) The South Australian Industrial Commission should be regarded as the authority responsible for determining on both salaries and conditions of employment of all staff presently covered by awards of the Teachers Salaries Board.

(c) The salaries and conditions of employment of school assistants and aides should be determined by the South Australian Industrial Commission under provisions contained within an amended Education Act and, where appropriate, an amended Technical and Further Education Act. 242

R15.3 (a) Staff employed in schools in promotion positions involving responsibility for financial management, evaluation and curriculum development should have undergone training and possess expertise that would enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

(b) Staff employed in administrative positions involving financial management should be expected to have received special training and to possess expertise in the financial aspects of administration at the professional and paraprofessional levels as appropriate.

(c) Professional staff employed in the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should be expected to have received training and to possess expertise in curriculum development, evaluation or research.

(d) Such training and expertise as referred to above should be seen as the necessary pre-requisites for undertaking such work and not necessarily grounds for receiving a higher level of remuneration. 243

### CHAPTER 16 : THE USE OF LIMITED RESOURCES

R16.1 The State Government should initiate a fundamental review of resource policies for various educational services and programs including the appropriate levels of student, parent and employer contributions to the costs of these services. 248

R16.2 (a) The Educational Policy and Priorities Executive should be established comprising the heads of the major administrative units in the education portfolio together with representatives of the Public Service Board and the State Treasury to provide an effective corporate approach to the planning and delivery of educational services in the State.

(b) The Educational Policy and Priorities Executive should be chaired by the Executive Director of the Office of the Ministry of Education. 249

R16.3 (a) Pupil-teacher ratios should be held at least constant and schools should be required to undergo reductions in the teaching force to a level that is consistent with their current pupil-teacher ratio as the numbers of pupils decrease.

(b) Models, guidelines and strategies should be developed and discussed with school principals and staff to enable schools to adjust to enrolment decline, and to reductions in the number of staff in the school to levels associated with constant pupil-teacher ratios.

(c) The Education Department should improve the quality of data that it holds about the teaching service so that more adequate planning can occur in colleges of advanced education and universities, to ensure that an adequate supply of teachers is available at all times during the next decade to meet the demands of particular educational levels and in specific curriculum areas. 255

R16.4 (a) Schools should be given greater freedom to manage their own affairs, that a notional "basket of services" be developed to cover all school based recurrent non-salary costs and that schools should be assigned an annual block grant to meet such costs, and that the expenditure of the grant should be the responsibility of the School Council.

(b) The level of grant should be reviewed annually to cover cost changes calculated on the notional "basket of services".

(c) The income obtained by a school from leasing its facilities should, under specified circumstances, be used to supplement the educational program of that school.

(d) A school should be charged leasing fees for facilities held that are surplus and above standard requirements. 262

R16.5 (a) A Property Advisory Group should be established and attached to the Office of the Ministry of Education that has oversight of all property transactions within the educational sector.

(b) The Property Advisory Group should be so constituted that its membership includes persons from such Government Departments as the State Treasury, the Public Buildings Department as well as persons with expertise in commercial property transactions. 263

R16.6 (a) The School Loans Advisory Committee should be required to receive advice through the Prospective Review Scheme to ensure that the loan being provided for a school meets an educational need of the school.

(b) Schools, which are disadvantaged because of the nature of the community served by the school, should continue to be eligible for financial support under a Disadvantaged Schools Capital Works Program to enable such schools to improve their facilities and advice on the awarding of grants through this program should be obtained through the Prospective Review Scheme. 266

R16.7 (a) Consideration should be given to permitting selected schools to become direct grant schools receiving a block grant, appropriately calculated to cover all staffing and recurrent resource expenditure for a year with the use of these resources being determined by the School Council.

(b) A direct grant school would be required to follow the curriculum policies that applied to all government schools.

(c) A direct grant school would also be entitled to increase its funds by the leasing of its premises or by charging fees, provided that no student would be excluded from the school on account of an inability to pay the required fees.

(d) A direct grant school would not be entitled to refuse students on the grounds of race, sex, ethnic background, religion or intellectual ability (except in the latter case where appropriate facilities are not available).

(e) A direct grant school should be required to undergo a prospective review every three years. 268

R16.8 (a) Regional Directors should ensure that high schools wherever possible form into clusters of adjacent schools to eliminate unnecessary duplication of subjects and courses, and to increase the range of courses being offered, thereby catering more adequately for the needs of a greater proportion of the school population.

(b) Regional Directors should encourage high schools to specialize their programs in particular curriculum areas, so that the subjects taught in schools at Years 11 and 12 are provided for economically viable groups. 270

R16.9 (a) The co-ordinated planning of educational programs between the schools and colleges of technical and further education should be a prime concern of Regional Offices of Education, and where Regional Councils exist such matters should be brought before the Regional Council for its consideration.

(b) Such co-ordination between schools and colleges should aim at the more efficient and effective use of facilities and staff within the region. 271

R16.10 Policies should be developed to restore the grants to schools to a clearly specified level and that in future years the grants should be maintained at this level with annual adjustments to the grants to allow for increases due to inflation. 276

R16.11 (a) The resource management functions in the education sector should be developed so that they make an effective contribution at the policy making levels of education agencies.

(b) The education agencies should involve people from a wide range of disciplines and experience backgrounds in their management functions. 276

# CHAPTER 1

# THE FIRST REPORT

## Introduction

1.1 It is rare for a Committee of Enquiry to be asked to report in two stages, thereby providing the Committee with an opportunity to discuss and comment on the reactions to its first report, prior to developing the arguments and the recommendations in the second phase of inquiry and review. The Committee in its first report noted that the changes had been extensive and the reforms widespread following the release of the Report in 1971 of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia which had been chaired by Emeritus Professor P.H. Karmel[1]. As a consequence its task was not only to undertake an investigation into the conduct of education in South Australia, but also to review the effectiveness of the many changes that had occurred over the intervening period from 1971 to 1981. In addition, the Committee was required to provide guidelines for the future development of education in the State.

1.2 The Committee in its first report emphasized that there was no need for radical changes in the educational system at this time nor during the next decade, and that its recommendations were essentially those for planned development in certain areas. The evidence available to the Committee indicated that, generally, both parents and community members who were closely associated with schools held in high regard the education provided in the State and expressed the view that the responsible authorities were facing up to and tackling problems in effective ways. Nevertheless, the Committee was aware of dissatisfaction expressed by employers and some members of the public, as well as some persons from the academic world, with respect to the quality of education provided by the schools. As a consequence the Committee, rather than make a few bald recommendations, devoted considerable attention in its first report to providing an account of issues and problems that it saw confronting those responsible for the provision of education in the State. However, much of the debate that followed the publication of the first report has focused on a rather parochial consideration of the acceptability of the recommendations to one party or another and not on a circumspect consideration of the underlying ideas and issues. There must necessarily be a scaling down in the magnitude of programs in certain areas and an extension of activities in others, together with the opening up of new programs to meet changing conditions and circumstances. It is perhaps inevitable that those whose programs and activities were the subject of a reduction should argue tenaciously to maintain their current standing and establishment. It is unfortunate that they are reluctant to re-examine their present function in relation to areas of greater need and adapt their programs to allow those needs to be met.

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[1] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia (Chairman: P.H. Karmel). Education in South Australia. Report of the Committee. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, 1971.

## A Review of Issues

1.3 It is of value in the opening chapter of this second report to review the critical issues that emerged from the first phase of the inquiry and were presented and discussed in detail in the previous report of this Committee. While in the first report there were many secondary issues which were considered, but which did not become the subject of specific recommendations and which cannot be raised again here, the Committee believes that such issues should not be cast aside lightly or ignored. Consequently, the Committee asks that those responsible for the planning of education in the State should read beyond the recommendations listed in the opening pages of its previous report and should examine the side issues that were presented and discussed and consider their implications for policy and practice. While the Committee is aware that this has sometimes occurred, it has been surprised how rarely during the second phase of its inquiry it has been asked to elaborate on such issues which were touched on briefly in its first report. Where the Committee has been asked to re-examine an issue, and where it has moved from the position adopted in its first report, it will find occasion to comment on the point in this present volume. In addition, the Committee, from its visits to educational institutions has found it necessary to reconsider some aspects of its first report, and as a consequence has modified its views and the recommendations that it made. It will likewise comment on such changes in this second report.

## Declining Enrolments

1.4 Perhaps the most significant problem that faces the providers of early childhood education, the school system and the institutions of higher education are those associated with declining enrolments. As a consequence of changes in fertility rates, changing patterns of internal migration and a slowing down of projected increases in school retention rates, a significant decline in school enrolments has occurred at the primary school level since the date at which the Karmel Committee reported in 1971, and at the secondary school level since 1975. This trend in enrolment decline is expected to continue for some years. However, if practices were to change with respect to staying longer at school, the decline in total numbers would be less than that currently predicted.

1.6 The Committee urged most strongly that changes in both actual and predicted school enrolments should be carefully and systematically monitored and the findings used in detailed forward planning. It has been pleased to note that this is now occurring within some sectors[2]. Nevertheless, the Committee notes that in the debate which has taken place on the reductions in the education budget for 1981-82 with respect to both schools and pre-schools, the fact that there was expected to be a significant decline in enrolments has rarely been mentioned. The consequences of the decline in enrolments will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 16 of this report. Clearly there is insufficient awareness and acceptance that the decline in enrolments in the schools and pre-schools will necessarily lead to a significant scaling down of programs in certain areas, and as a consequence resources could be made available for developments in other areas of education of greater importance. The Karmel Committee in 1971 made recommendations for a system that it envisaged would expand dramatically and would continue to expand. From hindsight, its projections in this regard were grossly in error, and the education sector has been slow to respond to the decline that has occurred and will continue to take place over the coming decade.

## Planning and Policies

1.6 Over the past fifteen years there has been considerable dispersion of the administration of the education sector from a single department which had control over all except the university, the institute of technology and the small union of kindergarten centres, to two departments and a tertiary education authority, as well as a large number of committees of advice and statutory authorities. In order to co-ordinate more effectively this greatly dispersed range of programs and administrative units, the South Australian Government has already acted on the advice of the Committee in its first report to establish an Office of the Ministry of Education. However, there has been widespread reluctance on the part of nearly all concerned to establish an executive group that would help to rationalize programs and activities across the education portfolio. It would appear that each component part of the portfolio is afraid of intrusions into its own domain and has advanced arguments implying that the Minister of Education would lose flexibility and control over programs within his portfolio to an Education Policy and Priorities Executive. It has been suggested that from time to time working parties should be set up to undertake rationalization between sectors when such rationalization appears necessary. Nevertheless, the different education authorities are clearly failing to co-ordinate their planning in many areas which has significant consequences for the provision of education. A very simple example will suffice. In the course of discussions with representatives of the colleges of advanced education, it was stated that careful planning was not possible with respect to the supply of and demand for mathematics, physics and chemistry teachers, who would now appear to be in short supply in schools. The Committee was told that the necessary information was not available when requested from the Education Department, and the preparation of such teachers was shared between the colleges of advanced education and two autonomous universities. Such reasons are unacceptable, if the result is a shortage of appropriately qualified teachers for work in schools in certain subject areas and a surplus of personnel are trained and available in other areas. Clearly this intersectoral issue could be readily resolved by a corporate planning approach; yet it must remain unresolved while each unit is pursuing its own independent path. Many other examples could be advanced, and the Committee again advocates that determined efforts be undertaken to engage in corporate planning within the education portfolio in order to ensure that the State's needs in education are met as economically and effectively as possible.

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[2] For example, South Australia, Education Department. S.A. Government Schools. Report on Enrolment Changes, Planning and Management of Facilities. (mimeo) July 1981.

1.7 The Committee also noted that there was a fear of a small Research and Planning Group that would provide firm evidence on which policy decisions might be made. The Committee draws attention to the failure over the decade from 1971 to 1981 to make provision for declining enrolments and to the continued expansion of certain facilities that would, if the evidence had been assembled and presented to the appropriate decision making group, have been seen to be unnecessary and redundant. The Committee believes that there is a need for a small and highly competent Research and Planning Group to provide independent evidence and advice to both the Office of the Ministry and to all parts of the education sector on the many aspects of the provision of education in South Australia. It was not intended that this Research and Planning Group should be large, and this was clearly stated in the first report. Furthermore, it was clearly advocated that the Group would, where possible, commission specific studies in order to assemble evidence to assist in the making of informed decisions[3].

## Regionalization

1.8 The Committee endorsed the policies that had been implemented by the Education Department in its regionalization of services and advocated a gradual and planned extension of these policies of regionalization. It believed that regionalization would lead to a more efficient and effective use of resources and would not involve a duplication of staff at both the central and regional offices. In addition, the Committee envisaged that greater rationalization in the use of limited resources would follow from co-ordination of services across the early childhood, school and technical and further education areas and from increased liaison among institutions both within and between these areas. These recommendations have been rejected in many responses to the first report. Again there appears to be a denial, with some notable exceptions, of the need to rationalize programs and activities between areas. However, at a time when there is necessarily a scaling down of some services and an expansion of others, careful planning and co-ordination is not only desirable but essential. The members of the Committee have been interested to learn from their visits to different regions of the State that there are regional committees operating under the auspices of both the Childhood Services Council and the Kindergarten Union, not only in non-metropolitan areas but also in the outer fringes of the metropolitan area. Those regional committees, established by the Childhood Services Council, involve representatives from the Kindergarten Union, the Education Department and other providers of early childhood services. It has also become necessary in some country regions to establish informal regional committees to plan the provision of services in the field of technical and further education. In addition, in some regions working parties with representatives of the Education Department and the colleges of technical and further education have been set up to plan and develop Link Courses. The Commitee commends these initiatives which provide evidence of a recognition of the need for co-ordinated planning at the local level. However, these initiatives will continue to be spasmodic unless there is some continuing thrust towards regional co-ordination and co-operation. The Education Department's program of regionalization is well advanced and was seen by the Committee to provide a useful framework for the extension of the regional co-ordination of the provision of educational services that the Committee believed to be desirable. The fact that informal regionally based groups are already operating suggests to the Committee that an extension such as was proposed in the first report is seen to be necessary in those non-metropolitan regions where a more effective use of resources is being sought and fostered. Whether these developments should in the long term extend to the establishment of Regional Education Boards, similar to those existing in New Zealand, is unclear. However, the Committee believes that much can be gained from community involvement in education at a local level and from co-operation and co-ordination wherever possible.

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[3] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia (Chairman: J.P. Keeves). Education and Change in South Australia. First Report of the Committee. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, 1981, p.5-10.

## Early Childhood Services

1.9 The Committee was greatly impressed with the range of coverage and the diversification of services that have been provided in the early childhood field through the establishment and effective operation of the Childhood Services Council. In looking ahead to the future the Committee recognized that the family is, and will continue to be, the key agency in the education of the young child. In addition, it envisaged the gradual development of a wide range of services to provide support and assistance for the home in furthering the growth and development of the child. It believed that the first of these thrusts would lead to a range of programs to prepare young people for parenthood and to assist parents to fulfil an educative role at successive stages in the life of the child. The second of these thrusts is likely to give rise to a panoply of services that would be less formally organized than has commonly occurred in the past, to meet the needs of children, particularly those from birth to 4 years of age. These services the Committee believed would be developed in response to local community needs, would tend to be directed towards the health, education and welfare of young children, and would involve close collaboration between small agencies and the family. While there will probably be a scaling down of some service requirements because of declining numbers of children, there will be a need to use any funds that are available towards the development of new services in which parents and the local community would make a substantial contribution. The Committee also noted that formal distinctions between pre-school and child care were rapidly disappearing, and that the major sponsors of early childhood services were engaged in or associated with the provision of both pre-school and child care programs. The Committee thus envisaged that the Early Childhood Development Complexes of Victoria, or the Combined Nursery Centres in England could provide effective models for future development.

## Technical and Further Education

1.10 The Committee from an examination of demographic trends foresaw that there would be substantial growth in the absolute numbers and the proportion of the South Australian population who would be seeking opportunities for initial training in colleges of technical and further education. In addition, it was anticipated that there would be a substantial increase in the numbers who would require retraining to keep abreast of the rapid technological developments envisaged for the future, together with an increase in the numbers wishing to take Stream 6 courses as a consequence of increased leisure time. Thus amalgamation of the Department of Further Education with the Education Department would remove some of the flexibility that was seen to be necessary to respond to changes in community needs. Nevertheless, the Committee considered that some rationalization in the provision of services and in the administration of the Department of Further Education was necessary, as was some rationalization of effort between the two departments. Following the publication of the first report, the separate existence of a Department of Technical and Further Education has been endorsed, but the need for rationalization of effort between the two Departments has not been acknowledged by the Departments as being either necessary or possible.

1.11 The Committee noted the low proportion of students relative to the other States who were engaged in technical and further education programs and who were enrolled full-time, as well as the apparently lower proportion of students enrolled in Stream 3 or basic trade programs in the South Australian colleges. It suggested that these matters would need to be given careful consideration if appropriate solutions to current problems associated with the training of skilled tradesmen in South Australia were to be achieved. However, the Department is reluctant to examine thoroughly and critically certain practices and policies that have become established within the Department. As a consequence, when the Department was faced with budgetary constraints for the 1981-82 financial year, it was ill-prepared to make savings in areas of overprovision and in certain areas of administration where such savings might have been made. It has sought to cut programs in areas where there would appear to be a high level of need such as in business administration, commercial studies and adult matriculation. Consideration will be given to these questions in a later section of this report.

## The Upper Secondary School

1.12 The Committee in its first report drew attention to the need for a re-examinaton of the nature and purpose of the upper secondary school that was expressed by the Schools Commission in 1980 in its report on Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds[4] with respect to schools in Australia, and by Professor Torsten Husén in his recently published book entitled The School in Question[5] with respect to schools in all parts of the Western World. The problems that have arisen for the upper secondary school have come as a consequence of the expansion of secondary education that has taken place in Australia, as elsewhere, following World War II. Large comprehensive high schools have been established to give more equal access to upper secondary and higher education and to the economic and social rewards that, in general, follow from the obtaining of qualifications through higher education. However, in Australia these comprehensive high schools at the upper secondary level have provided what is essentially an academic program suitable, in the main, only for those who wish to proceed to higher education. Where once, in South Australia, technical high schools existed such schools have been converted into comprehensive type schools which have gradually assumed a largely academic orientation. Nevertheless, there are some secondary schools in the State that have attempted to diversify their programs at the upper secondary level and these schools provide the foundations for future developments. At a time of widespread youth unemployment in the State of South Australia, many youth leave school to face an uncertain future rather than continue at school to study courses that are seen by them to be largely irrelevant to their needs and contrary to their interests. The Committee, it might be said, exposed a problem but did not adequately come to grips with the problem and advance a coherent solution. Consequently, it will undertake a further examination of the issues in this second report and will, if possible, suggest additional avenues that might be pursued. Nevertheless, the Committee was alarmed that among the responses to its first report was the commonly expressed view that the upper secondary schools were essentially academic institutions. Any diversification of their programs to meet the needs and interests of youth through the provision of more appropriate and alternative programs, as well as the traditional academically oriented courses, would be a denial of the true functions of the upper secondary school. It is clear that a major issue is emerging that will need further consideration across Australia, and not just in relation to the programs offered in the schools of one State.

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4. Schools Commission. Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds. Canberra:AGPS, 1980.
5. T. Husén, The School in Question. London: Oxford University Press, 1979.

1.13 Opposition to possible alternative solutions to this problem became most evident in reactions to the proposals advanced by the Committee for changes to the Matriculation Examination currently conducted by the Public Examinations Board of South Australia. The Committee would argue that by its name this Board serves the wider public and not just those purposes associated with selection for institutions of higher education. While the importance of the selection function of a Year 12 examination is not denied, its functions in the assessment of student learning and in the accreditation of appropriate courses during the later years of schooling are extremely important ones, particularly for the substantial numbers of students who do not proceed to higher education. The Committee proposed that the courses offered by schools at the Year 12 level should fall into four classes. First, there would be registered subjects that would be developed within schools and assessed at the school level. Secondly, there would be accredited subjects that might originate from schools, tertiary institutions or curriculum development groups and would be accredited by the Public Examinations Board, but would be largely internally assessed with between school moderation of assessments. Thirdly, there would be, as at present, courses that would be developed externally, and would, in the main, be externally assessed for the purposes of tertiary entry. These subjects would be referred to as tertiary entry subjects. Finally, there would be the special tertiary entry subjects that are similar in many respects to the tertiary entry subjects, but that pose many probems at the assessment stage. A Year 12 Certificate would be issued providing information on student performance in all courses studied. In addition, a statement would be issued providing Supplementary Information for Tertiary Entrance. The extremely unsatisfactory situation with respect to the fourth group of courses was largely ignored by reactants. Furthermore, most reactants would appear to reject totally the first group as having little useful purpose in upper secondary education, and they would accept the second group only if the courses were developed through procedures controlled largely by tertiary institutions. Thus at a time when there is a need to reshape and reform the programs offered at the upper secondary school level, the tertiary institutions are in the main demanding that they continue to control all courses that are to receive public recognition at the upper secondary level. On the one hand the Committee does not wish to see a decline in the standard of achievement of those entering tertiary institutions. However, on the other hand it believes that recognition of the Year 12 Certificate should be accorded to the courses studied by students who do not plan to proceed to further study at universities and colleges of advanced education. The Committee in its first report drew attention to the favourable reviews of the developments that have taken place in the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. While it did not propose changes that would be as liberal as those that have occurred in these two systems, it did advocate some movement that it believed would provide a workable alternative for the South Australian situation.

## Non-Government Schools

1.14 In considering issues relating to the non-government schools in South Australia, the Committee was concerned with the problems that are arising within the State as they are in other parts of Australia, from the establishment of small schools by certain religious sects. The Committee had noted that while there had been a 20 per cent reduction in the number of Catholic schools within the State over the previous 15 years, there had also been a 33 per cent increase (from 42 to 56 schools) in the number of independent schools over the past five years. Although some of these schools had not attracted large numbers of students, they were becoming eligible for assistance from the Commonwealth Schools Commission for their capital development and from both State and Commonwealth Governments for their recurrent costs. The policy of registration for teachers, introduced in 1974, has ensured that these schools can not be staffed by untrained teachers. However, the absence of compulsory registration of schools made it possible for such schools to exist whose facilities could be basically unsatisfactory and whose educational programs could be essentially unsound. Since the writing of the first report, the registration of schools has been proceeded with, and it is evident that some of the problems that the Committee foresaw have been overcome.

1.15 The Committee was nevertheless concerned that schools could be established to serve exclusively a particular sub-group in Australian society and that such schools could have a divisive effect. Moreover, there was nothing to prevent these schools from having access to moneys in substantial amounts for both their recurrent expenditure and their capital development. Consequently, the Committee contended that such schools should provide access for students irrespective of race, ethnic origin, ability, class or religion. The Committee, in advocating open access policies, was proposing that it was unwise to allow schools to develop in the State through support from public moneys that had a right to exclude students on the grounds of their racial background, ethnic origin or low ability, or because they did not belong to a particular social or religious group. Thus the Committee would not advocate the provision of financial support for a school which served, deliberately and exclusively, gifted children, children from a particular religious sect, or children from a particular ethnic group. However, the Committee believed that it would not be inappropriate if a school, which was assisted from State and Commonwealth sources and had a limited capacity, gave some preference to students who were practising members of a particular faith, providing membership of that faith was not a necessary and sufficient condition for entry into the school. The Committee in its thinking on these matters draws a distinction between two aspects of registration namely the right to existence, if supported fully from private sources, and the right to receive moneys from public funds for either capital development or the meeting of recurrent costs.

## Educating for Leisure

1.16 The Committee in the consideration of future trends in Australian society drew attention to the fact that within this century there had been a drop of nearly 40 per cent in the number of hours in a lifetime during which a person might be expected to undertake paid work. This decline in total numbers of hours worked during a lifetime might be expected to fall significantly further, if there is increased use of automated systems in business and industry. Thus it becomes essential for educational institutions at all levels to develop programs that are concerned with educating for leisure not only to ensure the creative and fulfilling use of leisure during the present but also for some time in the distant future life of an individual. The Committee believes that it is possible to help people to develop skills, interests and attitudes which influence whether or not they use their leisure time in a creative way that is personally rewarding and contributes to health, happiness and self-fulfilment. Thus the role of leisure education programs is to stimulate people taking the courses to explore their own talents, interests and values in a way that will foster their self-development and help them to make constructive and rewarding use of their leisure time. In addition, leisure education programs, followed by the constructive use of leisure time, must be seen as an "investment in human capital". It must be argued that the levels of knowledge, and physical and mental health and the adaptiveness of members of Australian society are important components of our capital resources and of more consequence than real estate, buildings, factories, equipment and machines.

1.17 Hence the Committee advocated that leisure education programs should be raised to a position in schools where they were seen to be of greater importance than in the past, with deliberate attempts being made to foster the constructive use of leisure time during the years of schooling, through both curricular and extra-curricular programs and through the promotion of community based leisure time activities. Where possible, schools should be encouraged to develop facilities for joint use by school and community groups. The Committee emphasized the importance of Stream 6 courses in colleges of technical and further education; there is little doubt that these courses are fulfilling a need in the community. However, such courses should not be conducted by the colleges at the expense of programs which provide training in the basic trades and on which the industrial and commercial life of the State, in part, depends. The Committee believed that this could be achieved by requiring students taking Stream 6 courses to make payments at a level which would fully cover the direct costs of conducting the courses. However, some groups of students in special need who wished to take such courses could be exempt from the payment of fees. It would also seem appropriate for the Education Department to conduct courses in schools on a similar basis, and for assistance to be provided in a similar way to such organizations as the Workers Educational Association and the Pre-Retirement Association.

## A Youth Policy

1.18 The Committee was confronted with a major problem associated with the very high proportions of unemployed youth in South Australia. This problem had become particularly serious since 1975, was more acute for girls up to the age of 19 years than for boys, and appeared to be continuing to increase rather than decrease. It was noted, however, that this problem existed in most western industrialized countries, where it was considered that the problem was not likely to be short lived. Even if general unemployment rates were to fall, a high level of unemployment among youth was likely to remain for the foreseeable future. Contrary to the beliefs held by many engaged in educational work, the Committee maintained the view that bold and radically new policies were required if effective solutions to the problem were to be achieved. Moreover, the Committee contended that educational programs, if different from those offered by conventional schooling, could make a very significant contribution to developing appropriate solutions to the problem. It argued that as a matter of some urgency efforts should be made to develop an integrated and co-ordinated policy to guarantee for youth appropriate education, employment, or part-time education and part-time employment at least to an age of 18 years. It was recognised that the issues were confounded both by the joint involvement of Commonwealth and State instrumentalities, and by the multiplicity of government departments that were involved at the State and Commonwealth levels.

The problem was considered to be of such magnitude and consequence as to require the setting up of a Youth Policy Council that would be directly responsible to the Premier and report through the representatives on the Council to the Ministers of Education, Industrial Affairs and Employment, and Community Welfare. During the intervening months the Commonwealth Government has offered to support appropriate programs at the State level provided that the States would also make significant contributions. The Committee is greatly concerned that a significant proportion of the moneys being made available would appear to be allocated to curriculum development rather than providing guaranteed education, training or employment for youth who are currently faced with long periods of unemployment after leaving school prematurely. This comment should not be taken to imply criticism of the many effective programs being run by schools and colleges of technical and further education both separately and in collaboration, or of the opportunities that are being provided for work experience and training by industry and commerce. There is, however, recognition that those programs which have been provided to assist youth directly are likely to be the most rewarding, and that there is need to develop policies for vigorous programs of this kind. The Committee also emphasized that the services provided must not be exclusively youth oriented, but should be directed towards youth in a family context. While it was recognized that during adolescence there is a striving for independence, the influence of the family on the actions of youth cannot be denied, and should be incorporated into the policies developed. The Committee was concerned that failure to develop appropriate policies of guaranteed education, training and employment for youth could allow divisions to grow that might in the long term lead to a serious breakdown in our society.

## The Teaching Service

1.19 From the evidence presented to it, the Committee had noted that over the past decade there had been very substantial reductions in pupil-teacher ratios and presumably accompanying decreases in the sizes of classes in South Australian schools. Indices of per pupil costs at both the primary and secondary levels over the decade when compared with the Consumer Price Index for the Adelaide Region were used to give some indication of the substantial increases in resources devoted to educational programs over this period. The Committee also reported that indices of recurrent resource expenditure for government schools in South Australia in 1979 were the highest of those for the six Australian States and that, in comparison with those for other school systems in Australia, both primary and secondary schools in this State had very favourable pupil-teacher ratios. Consequently, the Committee was concerned about certain aspects of the pressure for increased expenditure to maintain staffing levels in schools at a time of declining enrolments. However, it also argued that new developments were urgently needed in certain areas such as in establishing youth guarantee programs, providing alternative courses in upper secondary schools and for the restructuring of the Public Examinations Board. In order to provide a fuller understanding of the issues involved, the Committee reported work that its staff had undertaken into relationships between pupil-teacher ratios, average class sizes, average non-contact time of teachers and changes in costs of educational provision. The evidence presented was clear. Further changes in class sizes, or increases in the non-contact time for teachers, through programs of increased study leave for teachers, could only take place with considerable increases in the costs of education. Furthermore, it was apparent from the evidence available that further reductions in average class sizes by one or two students were unlikely to produce recognizable gains in student learning.

1.20 In considering issues involving the teaching service, the declining enrolments in South Australian schools presented new problems for those who were responsible for the provision of education within the school system, for those responsible for the administration of schools, and for those who had planned careers in the field of teaching. The report advanced a number of proposals for the management of staffing and strongly recommended that the promotion structure of the teaching service should be changed to allow more flexibility and to accommodate local specifications of positions and the selection of persons appointed to fill those positions. This would involve the introduction of limited tenure appointments for persons in promotion positions. In addition, the Committee advocated that in order to maintain flexibility within the teaching service new staffing policies should be developed in relation to the use of contract appointments in specified circumstances.

## The First Report in Perspective

1.21 In the months between the submission of the first report and the preparation of the second some of the recommendations made by the Committee were implemented. However, the volume Education and Change in South Australia was published at a time when a report on the Review of Commonwealth Functions was released that sought in some ways to redefine relations between the

Commonwealth and State Governments, particularly with respect to education, and that proposed some significant changes for education in Australia.[6] More recently negotiations between the Commonwealth and State Governments on the allocation of funds to the States for the 1981-82 financial year have resulted in substantial reductions in the total amounts of money available to all Australian States. Since education is a major component of each State's budget as has been shown for South Australia in the first report of this Committee, it has been inevitable that there should be some reviews aimed at reductions in the moneys made available for education in South Australia. The budget of the Education Department was cut in 1981-82 by approximately one per cent, and the administrative staff of the Department would appear to have borne the brunt of the reductions that were made.

1.22 Events in Australia do not occur in isolation from those taking place in other parts of the Western World. The constraints imposed on the provision of educational services are no exception. In many other countries the reductions in spending on certain aspects of education have been more severe than those being experienced in Australia. If this were not so it would have been tempting to assume that events in Australia were a direct consequence of changes in Commonwealth-State relationships. It would appear, however, that after many years of gradual expansion of expenditure on education, a strong dissatisfaction has developed, that is relatively widespread across Australia, associated with what is seen to be a failure of educational services to yield benefits that are commensurate with the high level of financial resources that they consume. At a time when there are high levels of unemployment in most of the countries involved, when the limited resources available are needed to promote technological development in order to increase productivity and when there are widespread and insistent calls to reduce levels of taxation, the consequence has been a cut in expenditure on education. It must be recognized that these reductions in educational expenditure in other countries, as in South Australia, are occurring at a time when there is a decline in enrolments in the pre-schools, schools and teacher education institutions. There is, however, some expansion in areas concerned with the provision of programs in technical and further education. While educational systems may find it difficult to adjust to a scaling down of some parts of their operations, they must recognize that such a rationalization and reduction of their programs and services is inevitable.

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[6] Australia. Ministerial Statement. Review of Commonwealth Functions. Canberra: AGPS, 1981.

1.23 Of greater concern is the pervading air of disillusionment with education that exists not only in other highly industrialized countries but also in Australia. The consequence of such negative attitudes towards education is that they retard the development of new initiatives that are necessary if appropriate solutions to certain emergent societal problems are to be found. Thus it is not possible to prepare for technological development and to increase productivity without changes in priorities and without increasing expenditure on some facets of education in order to produce the necessary trained personnel.

1.24 The events that have occurred in South Australia and across Australia without doubt reflect those that have occurred elsewhere, and are nevertheless unpalatable. It is clearly the responsibility of the Committee of Enquiry at this time and in this setting to attempt to place these matters in perspective and to advise accordingly those responsible for the provision of educational services in South Australia over the next decade. Under these circumstances the advice that can be given by this Committee of Enquiry must necessarily be significantly different from that provided to the South Australian Government in 1971 by the Committee chaired by Emeritus Professor P.H. Karmel. That Committee met at a time when education in Australia was poised for expansion. The unmet needs of Australian education were substantial, and that Committee of Enquiry paved the way for development not only within the State of South Australia, but across Australia as a whole. The function of this present Committee must be to identify the areas where improvement or growth is essential for state development and to advise on needs in those areas and how those needs might be met. At the same time the Committee must recognize that at a time of declining enrolments in the pre-schools, schools and teacher education institutions, considerable reductions should be made in certain areas. Through this rationalization resources might be set free to promote and foster developments in other areas where such developments are clearly pressing and essential. Thus the Committee must not only identify areas where development might occur, but it must also propose areas where reductions should take place.

1.25 The tasks of the Committee have become more difficult and complex than were initially envisaged when the Committee first met. Not only are relationships between Commonwealth and State Governments with respect to education in a state of flux, but as a result of Commonwealth Government policies, substantial and to some extent unexpected changes have occurred that in the long term could have significant consequences for education in this country as a whole. It has become necessary for the State system of education to accommodate to these changes, and to maintain some essential activities at a reduced level, so that at a later stage new growth and developments in these areas can take place. By way of example, the Committee in its first report proposed, for reasons that it will still support, the dis-establishment of the Research and Planning Directorate within the Education Department. However, the Review of Commonwealth Functions not only recommended a reduction in the work performed by the Schools Commission[7] in providing statistical information on Australian schools that is considered to be essential for educational planning and was widely used in the preparation of the first report of this Committee, but it also proposed the dissolution of the Education Research and Development Committee[8]. In its first report, this present Committee proposed the establishment of a small Research and Planning Group that would not only undertake research and planning activities to serve education in the State as a whole, but would also fund the undertaking of research within the State to provide a research basis for policy and planning. There would appear to be little general support for even a small Research and Planning Group within South Australia and there exists some misunderstanding of what the Committee proposed. It is, nevertheless, apparent that there will be drying up of statistical and research based information to guide those involved in the making of educational policies both within this State and in other parts of Australia. This withdrawal of necessary evidence for decision making in education cannot continue for long without a serious deterioration in the quality of the decisions that are made. Consequently, it would appear to be essential to maintain a high quality but small research and planning unit that would provide a service for those responsible for the making of educational policy and for planning.

1.26 Some critics of the first report of this Committee have commented on what they saw to be a failure on the part of the Committee to undertake detailed calculations of the savings that would flow from the reduction or scaling down of activities in certain areas or detailed costings of its proposals for the new initiatives that it proposed. The Committee does not deny the need for or the importance of such calculations and costings.

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[7] Australia. Ministerial Statement, 1981. op. cit., p.22.
[8] ibid. p.22.

However, before these calculations could be undertaken it would be necessary for extensive statements of the budgets in the different areas of education to be prepared in terms of the detailed programs. Such a breakdown of the budget according to more detailed programs has not been prepared for the 1981-82 budget. Thus, it has not been possible for the Committee to examine the costs of the different programs within the education budget. Whether in the future the necessary information could be made available for a detailed examination of the programs within the education portfolio is unclear. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that such information is critical for the future planning of education in South Australia.

# CHAPTER 2

## CONCERNING THE SECOND REPORT

### The Terms of Reference

2.1 The Committee of Enquiry by its terms of reference was asked to consider education in South Australia in a very broad context. The operations of universities and colleges of advanced education were specifically excluded because they had been the subject of a recent Committee of Enquiry chaired by Dr. D.S. Anderson[1]. However, it will be noted from the terms of reference, which are set out below, that in order to consider changes to the curriculum and teaching methods of schools and colleges or to consider developing a new system of evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of each institution, it could become necessary to comment on the educational programs and courses of instruction offered by universities and colleges of advanced education.

The terms of reference for the Committee are:

> To examine and to make recommendations to the Minister of Education on the educational system of the State of South Australia (excluding the universities and colleges of advanced education) with particular reference to -
>
> (1) the identification of the influences of an economic, demographic, technological and social nature on the educational system;
>
> (2) the implications of those influences for resource allocation, the most effective use of these resources and the priority for such allocation;
>
> (3) the organization of the Education Department, the Department of Further Education, and Childhood Services, including responsibilities for the management of financial, human and other resources, the relationship between the three organizations, and any rationalization which might be desirable;
>
> (4) the means by which curricula and teaching methods of the schools and colleges should be changed to meet new technologies and changing employment patterns;
>
> (5) the desirability of developing a new system of school and college evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of each institution.

The terms of reference provided for the Committee were extremely wide. Nevertheless, they raised some very specific issues such as those associated with the introduction of new technology and changing employment patterns that needed to be considered in some detail in the reports that were prepared.

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[1] Committee of Enquiry into Post Secondary Education in South Australia (Chairman: D.S. Anderson). Post Secondary Education in South Australia. Report of the Committee. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, 1979.

2.2 The Committee was initially asked to prepare a report in time to guide the planning that was necessary for development of the state budget for the 1981-82 financial year. It was quickly recognized that this would be an impossible task in the time available. However, in order to assist with the preparation of the educational components of the state budget, it was agreed to report as far as was possible on the first three terms of reference prior to the end of February 1981. These terms of reference were primarily concerned with the structure of the education portfolio and the organizational and management problems of the different units within the portfolio. The Committee was able to complete a draft form of the report by that date, which after some revision and editing was published and released for discussion and debate a month later. The two remaining terms of reference were concerned with curricula and teaching methods and with evaluation. The problems associated with these two areas were less pressing, but nevertheless of considerable importance. It was proposed that the examination of these areas should be deferred and incorporated into a second report that would be completed prior to the end of December 1981, although it was recognized that the investigation of school curricula, teaching methods and evaluation questions could lead to a reconsideration of some of the issues raised in the first report. However, certain curriculum matters were considered to be of urgency for education in South Australia. As a consequence some aspects of the curricula of the upper secondary school and related matters concerned with the Public Examinations Board and the Year 12 Examination, with the development of effective policies for the education, training and employment of youth, and with educating for leisure were examined in detail in the first report. In general, these issues will not be re-examined in the same detail in the second report. Nevertheless, certain matters relating to these issues will be taken up again and, where necessary, elaborated upon. It was clearly possible that a more detailed inquiry into problems of the curricula, teaching methods and evaluation could lead to some reconsideration of the structure of the central administration of the Education Department and a fuller appreciation of resource issues, and the Committee in its second report will examine these matters. In the main, the Committee would not wish to reverse or change many of the recommendations that it made in its first report, and where it does, the amendments will be made clear.

2.3 Unfortunately, it was not possible for the Committee to examine in depth all questions that related to the first three terms of reference in its first report. Some issues that it indicated would require further consideration were the beginning of schooling, promotion during the early years of schooling, and transfer from primary to secondary school. The Committee had received important submissions on these and other similar matters, and regrettably had to defer consideration of these issues to its second report. However, it was planned to consider these questions as they related to the curricula and teaching methods used in schools, and where appropriate make recommendations on the necessary structural changes which might apply within the system.

## Procedures of Enquiry

2.4 In the preparation of the first report the Committee had available to it a very substantial number of earlier reports, prepared in some cases by groups external to the Education Department and the Department of Further Education and in some cases by working parties from within the Departments and similar organizations. In the preparation of the second report members spent considerable time visiting pre-schools, schools and colleges, meeting and talking to principals, staff, students and members of councils, and talking to the Directors and staff working within the regional offices. These visits to pre-schools, schools, colleges and regional offices have provided the members of the Committee with a much clearer view of the many facets of education within the State, and thus a firmer basis on which to develop both their recommendations and the arguments leading to those recommendations. The members of the Committee are extremely grateful to all, particularly the students and their parents and members of Councils, who spoke with interest and concern about their schools and on a wide range of matters relating to them. It was perhaps unfortunate that visits to schools and colleges could not be carried out at an earlier stage in the enquiry. The members of the Committee have found that such visits have reinforced many of the recommendations and arguments advanced in its first report. By way of example, the Committee at one stage was led to consider whether it had been wise in its proposals for the greater delegation of responsibility to regional offices and through the regional offices greater devolution of responsibility to schools. However, from its visits to the regional offices it became even more convinced of the very effective work being carried out by the regional offices, and of the moves already being made in the regions to establish committees of advice to assist Regional Directors and their staff, as well as the Principals of pre-schools, schools and colleges in their tasks of planning and administration of the range of educational services provided in a region. While there was no wish to proceed rapidly to establish elaborate new structures within the regions, there was a healthy approach to gradual evolution and experimentation in co-operative planning, in liaison between existing institutions and their members, and in effective co-ordination of services at a time when resources were recognized to be in short supply. These are the type of developments that the Committee had in mind when making its first report, and it has been greatly heartened to find from its visits to the regional offices that the necessary evolutionary changes are already in progress in some regions. With a little encouragement they will occur naturally where appropriate, without increased expenditure, and hopefully with a more rational use of resources.

2.5 During 1981, the Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis, sometimes for two day meetings, so that certain issues could be followed through in greater depth. To its meetings it has invited persons from different parts of the education portfolio to attend, to discuss their submissions, and where necessary and appropriate to provide supplementary documentation for the Committee. It has appreciated the discussions that have been held with these people. They have come willingly to discuss a wide range of issues. This has gradually helped the Committee to amplify the sometimes bland and platitudinous statements that were contained in submissions and in documents tabled before the Committee. Two general aspects of these discussions warrant consideration at this point. First, in response to a suggestion by a member of the Committee that there should be closer collaboration between educational bodies, or that rationalization in the use of limited resources might take place, the claim was generally made that a committee or a working party was established normally with a representative from another body attending to put the views of that other body. Rarely, was evidence presented or suggested of a genuine sharing of resources or of co-operation in operational activities as an effective procedure. Secondly, the response to a question of what was needed to advance a particular cause was generally a request for additional staff at a time when staffing and resources were known to be extremely limited, and expansion through the provision of additional staff was largely out of the question. Consequently, we question the perception and understanding of the current educational climate of a number of those whom we met in these Committee discussions. We believe that there is a need to re-examine the allocation of existing resources, and where necessary and possible to re-allocate some of these resources to new initiatives of higher priority. However, this view is not widely accepted within the education portfolio.

2.6 The Committee wishes to thank all those who have helped it in so many ways through the preparation of submissions, the provision of supplementary evidence, and through discussion with individual members of the Committee or with the Committee at its meetings. Many more issues have been raised than could be dealt with adequately in a published report. The failure of the Committee to examine some issues, which are of considerable importance, is a consequence of the magnitude of the task that the Committee was set, and not a disregard for the views expressed or the issues that were raised.

2.7 The Committee wishes to thank Mr. J.F. Gregory for his contributions to the work of the Enquiry. Unfortunately Mr. Gregory had to travel overseas during the critical period when the Committee was examining the drafts of the final report. Since Mr. Gregory was unable to contribute to the discussion of the final drafts of the report, he was unable to sign the report that was submitted to the Minister of Education. Nevertheless, Mr. Gregory was able to contribute significantly to the discussions that took place over a period of eighteen months and comment on the evidence placed before the Committee that influenced its proposals and recommendations.

# CHAPTER 3

# THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## The Curriculum and Its Problems

3.1 The Education Inquiry Committee in South Australia which met during the closing years of World War II and which presented its Final Report in mid-1949 was particularly concerned with issues relating to the curriculum of the schools and, more specifically, with the curriculum of the infant grades and of the secondary school.[1] The discussion that is reported and the proposals that were made sound a familiar note. The question that the work done in the infant grades (now referred to as the junior primary grades) was of little educational value was raised, and implicit in the criticism contained in submissions was the view that children were kept too long in the infant grades. To the critics it would appear important that children should be put to formal work in the three R's as early as possible, if not from the beginning of schooling, by the traditional methods of classroom instruction. The view of the Committee was clear:

> In our opinion the curriculum for the infant grades prescribes tasks adapted to the powers of the children. It is necessary that infants should obtain experience of objects and processes as a preparation for the understanding of symbols. It is unwise to place children at work on the three R's by the traditional methods immediately upon entry into school[2].

Likewise, in the consideration of the curriculum of the secondary schools, the Committee examined the issues of selection for different types of secondary schools and rejected selection by examination on several grounds including the assumed existence of three types of minds, the practical difficulty of operating such a scheme, and the likely weight of public feeling against compulsory selection that would arise in South Australia. The Committee did not accept that all secondary schools should be comprehensive, and supported the view that different types of schools should be permitted to exist and boys and girls should be able to choose the type of secondary education they wished to follow. With regard to a common curriculum the Committee said:

> It is difficult to frame a common curriculum setting out subjects which all boys and girls should take. All schools have not the staff to teach all or even most of these subjects and the wide range of abilities and interests among pupils shows the unsoundness of a common curriculum. But certain subjects

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1. Education Inquiry Committee (Chairman: E.L. Bean). Final Report. Adelaide: Government Printer, 1949.
2. ibid. p.44.

> should be the core of the curriculum in all types of secondary schools. For some the core should be the whole curriculum; but the abler pupils should have additional studies. To this extent we recommend a common curriculum. The object of a common curriculum is to ensure a general education. In addition to having the other characteristics mentioned above a general education should train the pupil to grasp and work from general principles. Every subject in the curriculum, whether academic or practical, can serve as a means of general education in this sense.[3]

It is clear that, while more than 30 years have passed, many of the issues remain, and as a consequence this present Committee in its report will need to consider the same and similar questions and recommend appropriate answers to meet current conditions and circumstances.

3.2 While the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia was undertaking its investigations in 1970, the then Director-General of Education issued a memorandum that has in the course of time had a significant impact on the curricula and teaching methods of the schools in South Australia. The most relevant section in this memorandum is:

> Within the broad framework of the Education Act, the general curriculum advised by the curriculum boards and approved by me as Director-General of Education, and the general policy set by the Director of your Division and communicated to you by circular, you have the widest liberty to vary courses, to alter the timetable, to decide the organization of the school and government within the school, to experiment with teaching methods, assessment of student achievement and in extra-curricular activities[4].

While the schools did not immediately take full advantage of the freedom given to them through the memorandum quoted above, the Karmel Committee of Enquiry was able to report that there had been been "a noticeable trend in recent years away from the detailed prescription of curricula by the Education Department towards giving more freedom to schools".[5] The Committee went on to applaud the opportunity that was made available in the primary schools and in the first three years of secondary schooling for the teachers to be freer to choose subjects, to choose the content of subjects and to organize the school as they thought best for the needs and interests of the children. However, because of its terms of reference the Committee concentrated its attention on the procedures used by the Director-General for keeping under review the curricula and teaching methods of the schools of the Department. It did not give its attention to the procedures that might be used by a school or a teacher to ensure that what was offered to the students within a school was satisfactory. As a consequence, the Committee directed its discussion to the structure and functions of the Advisory Curriculum Boards and Curriculum Committees, the Public Examinations Board and the role of the Research and Planning Branch.

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[3] ibid. p.48.

[4] A.W. Jones, Director-General, Memorandum: To Principals of all Department Schools. Freedom and Authority in the Schools. August 1970.

[5] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971. op. cit., p.503.

3.3 This present Committee is required by its terms of reference to make recommendations for the educational system of the State of South Australia giving particular reference to the means by which curricula and teaching methods in the schools and colleges should be changed to meet new technologies and changing employment patterns as well as the desirability of developing a new system of evaluation for schools and colleges to ensure the effectiveness of each institution. The Committee has learnt, in the course of its investigations, that if it were to limit itself in its considerations to the letter of its terms of reference it would have failed to examine certain problems that have emerged as a direct consequence of the memorandum issued in 1970 by the Director-General, and from the attempts that were made to implement the proposals of the Committee of Enquiry in 1971. In part, the criticisms that have been voiced to the Committee are consistent with criticisms that are widespread not only in Australia but also in other industrialized countries and are concerned with a decline in educational standards in the schools. Moreover, at a time when new technologies and new employment patterns are likely to make greater demands on the schools, there is a widespread belief that the schools are not meeting adequately the demands currently made upon them. While these criticisms do not solely have their origins in particular policies and practices associated with the system of education in South Australia they are, nevertheless, specifically directed towards the policies and practices operating within the State. Furthermore, there is a strongly voiced view being expressed from within the schools of South Australia, that school based curriculum planning and development cannot be made effective because the teachers in the schools have neither the time and the resources, nor the necessary expertise to undertake what they have learnt to be difficult and time-consuming tasks of developing appropriate curricula for each school. The Committee accepts these views and acknowledges the constraints that exist in schools. In addition, teachers have noted that there is in South Australia what appears to be a very sizeable Curriculum Directorate; one whose very size has been the subject of strong criticism by the Public Accounts Committee[6], that is available to help in the provision of appropriate curricula for the schools. Yet, sufficient advice and leadership do not appear to have been forthcoming. At this time after nearly a decade of experience with the opportunity to develop school based curricula, the teachers in the schools are asking for greater direction and leadership in the work of curriculum planning. It is possible that this call for help follows the public criticisms being made of work in the schools, and is in essence a strategy of defence being advanced by the schools when they have found themselves in a situation for which there is no easy solution. However, their cry would also appear to reflect the practicalities of a real world, that they have come to acknowledge in the course of attempting to develop their own courses and curricula.

3.4 In considering these problems the Committee must avoid a retraction and loss of the gains that have gradually emerged since the time over 30 years ago when the Bean Committee opened the doors which have led to considerable reform in schools. The Committee must fully recognize the need to cater adequately in the schools for individual differences between children (a point that it made directly in its first report[7]). In addition, it must recognize the need expressed very clearly by A.N. Whitehead over 60 years ago when considering the purposes and functions of schools, which was raised and discussed in the first report of the Committee:

> But the first requisite for educational reform is the school as a unit with its approved curriculum based on its own needs, and evolved by its own staff.[8]

The Committee must, nevertheless, examine the nature of the curricula that are being advocated by the Education Department, the mechanisms and structures provided by the Department to keep the curricula under review, and the leadership and materials provided by the Curriculum Directorate from within the Department to enable the schools to carry out the curricular responsibilities entrusted to them. In recent years the leadership in curricular matters has been provided by an extensive team of advisory staff, working from both the central and the regional offices and from special units within the Curriculum Directorate.

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[6] South Australian Parliament, Public Accounts Committee. Report on Accountability in the Education Department and Schools. December 1980, pp.95-99.

[7] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.4-2. (This notation refers to Chapter 4, page 2 in this publication).

[8] ibid. p.4-6.

However, the financial stringencies of recent years have greatly reduced the numbers of staff available for this advisory work. If from that examination the Committee can propose changes, both in the nature of proposed curriculum and the manner in which it is being implemented by the Curriculum Directorate and by the schools and their teachers, it believes that it has a responsibility to do so. Unfortunately, in proposing change at this time, it will be seen by some as a denial of the memorandum of August 1970 that has become enshrined in an unexpected way as a statement of the rights of the teaching service in South Australia. However, it is necessary to emphasize that the request for change has come to the Committee, in the main, from the principals and teachers of the schools, who are faced with the problems of curriculum development. They believe that they lack many of the skills as well as the time to undertake the necessary work to meet the needs of the students in their schools and to accomplish the tasks to their own satisfaction. It might be argued that greater provision of non-contact time for teachers, greater availability of teacher aides, and more resources in the schools would free teachers to undertake the work of curriculum development in a more satisfactory manner. The Committee would argue, that it is in part a lack of expertise, and in part, the complexity and the creative nature of the tasks involved in curriculum development that would appear to be preventing teachers from adequately undertaking curriculum development, rather than a lack of resources that could be overcome by greatly increased expenditure. The Committee notes that greatly increased expenditure has already occurred over the period from August 1970 to the present time, but this does not seem to have enabled schools to embark on substantial programs of curriculum development. In summary, complete freedom and authority for schools to develop their own curricula is unlikely to be feasible in any educational system, given the impossibility of providing all schools with the resources and expertise required for this to be fully effective. The Committee thus advocates strong leadership and guidance for schools from both the central administration and regional offices on curriculum matters.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R3.1 the staffs of central administration and the regional offices should provide strong leadership and guidance to the schools in curriculum matters.

## New Approaches to the Curriculum

3.5 During 1981 the Education Department released a statement of policy for schools titled Into the 80s Our Schools and their Purposes[9]. The publication of this statement was the culmination of an extensive consultative and co-operative enterprise. It sought to provide statements of policy for government schools in South Australia that would guide them in their planning and program development during the decade ahead. This document followed another policy statement that had been issued widely a few months earlier to educational institutions across Australia by the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra on the Core Curriculum for Australian Schools[10]. This statement had also been produced following widespread debate and discussion. The two documents were essentially similar in purpose and design, and have both been widely acclaimed. Consequently, it is inevitable that certain comparisons should be made between them because they are both apparently designed to assist schools in the tasks of school based curriculum development. In some respects both documents are the products of compromise to meet the requirements of many interested parties, and are less helpful to schools because of the very broad general terms in which they are expressed. Into the 80s is, however, more straightforward and rather more specific and is thus more likely to be of direct use to schools in the tasks of curriculum development. Core Curriculum for Australian Schools suffers in its attempt to include all within the "core", thereby ensuring that "core" is no longer a meaningful term in the Australian setting. It also provides a statement that teachers would have difficulty in disagreeing with, unless they were seeking a document that would help to focus attention on the essential elements of the curriculum. The tenor of both documents is that they touch on certain curricular issues at such a level of generality that an individual school or teacher could justify the choice of almost any aspect of curriculum policy or practice by reference to either or both documents.

3.6 As a consequence of the generality of these documents and the unavailability of papers which elaborate on the policies advanced in the Into the 80s statement, the Committee finds it necessary to comment on certain specific curriculum issues that it sees to be of consequence for education in South Australia over the next decade. Whether its criticisms are valid is unclear, because the full detail of the policies proposed is not yet available.

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[9] South Australia, Education Department. Into the 80s Our Schools and their Purposes. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, 1981.

[10] Curriculum Development Centre. Core Curriculum for Australian Schools. Canberra: CDC, 1980.

There are, however, several areas of some concern to the Committee that are evident from a comparison of the two policy statements. In Core Curriculum for Australian Schools there is an area of knowledge and experience that is titled "moral reasoning and action, value and belief systems". This area is amplified, in the following way, which gives an indication of its nature and function:

> The development of morality and the capacity to discriminate amongst values and beliefs is both a crucial part of the overall development of the rounded person and a civic necessity. Transformation of moral action from the level of habitual and routine behaviour in childhood to a mature stage of critical analysis and reflective action requires a systematic, continuing approach throughout the years of schooling. Values education relates to many aspects of life in addition to moral behaviour, but has close affinities with it.... Whilst the teaching of religious belief and practice cannot claim a place in a core, teaching about religion may be regarded as essential for all students in developing their understanding of the world in which they live[11].

The statement Into the 80s does not totally ignore this area but relegates it to one of minor consequence within the area of health and personal development. It merely advocates the development in students of "a coherent set of personal and social values to which they commit themselves, including honesty, consideration for others, self-discipline, acceptance of responsibility, self-reliance and initiative". Alternatively, it could be claimed that the field is covered in the area "human society" and involves the development of "an awareness and understanding of various value and belief systems, including the Judaeo-Christian tradition".[12] This is an area where schools generally have come under some criticism from many parents and employers through failure to develop in students responsible attitudes to others and self-discipline. The primary obligation for education in the area of moral reasoning and values must remain with the home, a point which is overlooked by many critics of the schools. Nevertheless, schools have an essential and vital role to perform in engendering responsible attitudes in students and in reinforcing the education which should be provided in the home. Furthermore, it would seem that a school system is totally ignoring a field of responsibility, if it does not accept a significant commitment to such aspects of education.

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[11] ibid. p.19.

[12] South Australia, Education Department, op. cit., p.21-22.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R3.2 a curriculum area concerned with "moral reasoning and action, value and belief systems" should be introduced into schools to rectify the omission of this area in the Into the 80s statement.

3.7 Core Curriculum for Australian Schools identifies nine curricular areas as "areas of knowledge and experience"[13], and by implication sees these as areas in which there is a large and coherent body of knowledge and human experience of which each individual student should learn something at school. Into the 80s, possibly in simplifying the ideas presented, refers to its eight fields as "areas of the curriculum" which should form a "basis for planning and organizing learning experiences"[14]. Such an approach does not necessarily imply that an area of knowledge or human experience is involved. However, unless a substantial area of knowledge and human experience is included, it would appear inappropriate to justify the level of emphasis to be given to an area within the school curriculum. There is one area that is listed in both documents which, while not unimportant for societal planning or for considering the social applications of scientific knowledge, would not appear to be an area of knowledge or human experience in its own right and would not appear to justify the emphasis given to it in both documents. This is the area of "Environmental Studies" or "Environmental Education". The issues to be presented in this area should involve a dependence on scientific knowledge. If they do not, and only attitudinal change is involved in the curriculum associated with this area, then there is little justification for its inclusion in the school curriculum. If the issues in this area are based on scientific knowledge then they are more rightly included in the scientific area of the curriculum. The Committee does not deny that such issues are of consequence at the right time and in the right context. However, the devotion of significant time to areas of the curriculum which do not have a substantial basis as an area of knowledge and human experience must have serious repercussions through limiting the time available for learning in areas that do. Schools and the Education Department must guard against the intrusion of these peripheral areas into the curriculum, when such limited time is available in the school week to teach in areas of essential learning.

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13. Curriculum Development Centre, 1980, op. cit., p.17.
14. South Australia, Education Department, 1981, op. cit., p.20.

3.8 The area of physical education received little emphasis in the statement issued in South Australia - Into the 80s. Passing reference occurred in the statement to the development of "skills, attitudes and understandings which will promote physical, mental, social and emotional health for themselves", and "skills for recreational use", as well as to the fact that "personal development includes the acquisition of physical skills".[15] However, the field of physical education is of far greater significance than is recognized and acknowledged in this important policy statement. The failure of this statement to contain adequate reference to the area of physical education should not be taken to imply that there is a lack of interest and concern within certain sections of the Education Department for physical education. The report of a Committee into Physical Education and Sport in South Australian Schools is testimony of both interest and concern. The policies and programs that are advocated in this report are based upon daily vigorous physical activity for all students at all levels of schooling and include programs for those students with a physical disability or training problem. Furthermore, the report advocates that schools make a greater commitment to sporting activities and programs. The report was greatly influenced by a study carried out in South Australian schools jointly by the Physical Education Branch of the South Australian Education Department and the Division of Human Nutrition of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in Adelaide.[16] The practical significance of this research was that it demonstrated clearly that the physical education programs commonly offered in South Australian schools were inadequate for promoting desirable levels of physical fitness, or body composition. Since the study also indicated that most South Australian school students did not spontaneously or voluntarily engage in out of school activities that would promote a healthy level of physical fitness, it was clearly necessary that there should be a renewed emphasis on such school programs with an extension to out of school activities.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R.3.3 a curriculum area concerned with "health and physical education" should be introduced into schools to rectify the partial omission of this area in the Into the 80s statement.

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15. ibid. p.21.
16. South Australia, Education Department. Committee of Enquiry into Physical Education and Sport in South Australian Schools (Chairperson, H.J.C. Mutton). Physical Education and Sport in South Australian Schools. Adelaide: The Department, 1981.

It is apparent that South Australian schools have in recent years not given high enough priority to the health needs of their students. Intervention programs built around planned vigorous physical activity must be accepted as the responsibility of every school and a substantial number of teachers in the schools. The recent research undertaken by the Physical Education Branch shows a way ahead, if the area of Health and Physical Development is acknowledged as an essential area in the curriculum of the schools.

3.9 In the discussion of school curricula, the terms "common curriculum" and "core curriculum" can no longer be used in a meaningful way. Yet it would appear that some fields of knowledge and human experience might be argued to be of more consequence than others. Moreover, it would seem that within certain fields there must be some elements that are essential learning for all children and others that are not. Into the 80s and Core Curriculum for Australian Schools are highly generalized statements that have been presented without supporting documentation, although it is anticipated that in due course some supplementary papers will be prepared. A significant deficiency is that the published statements lack any indication of the relative emphases to be given to the key areas at each age and grade level and would seem to imply that equal emphasis should be given to learning in each area at each stage of schooling. Over recent years deliberate efforts have been made to break down curricular barriers between age and grade levels, and this has some important and valuable consequences. However, to fail to differentiate between what might be taught at different age and grade levels and thus to provide a focus for the development of curricula at successive stages of schooling is to leave these important questions so open as to provide little guidance to schools. It is important to attempt to identify not only the appropriate curricular emphases for different stages of schooling, but also to indicate which aspects of the identified curriculum are essential, and which are merely desirable at the different stages. Thus it is necessary in the preparation of additional documents to subdivide the years of schooling into sequential stages, in part linked to age and grade, but not necessarily so, and to provide some indication of the curricular emphases that should be considered important at each stage. This is not a complete answer to the problem of helping schools to ensure that appropriate learning and teaching are provided for the students within the schools. However, we would argue that such documents would be a significant advance on the provision of very general statements with little indication of priorities or expectations at different stages of schooling. In the absence of such statements, the Committee must address itself to a detailed consideration of emphasis and priorities in the key areas of the curriculum identified in the policy statement Into the 80s.

3.10 The terms of reference of this enquiry demand that the Committee should examine the means by which curricula might be changed to meet new technologies and new employment patterns. It is, however, necessary to identify the likely impact of new technologies and new employment patterns. In the first report the Committee considered in some detail leisure education programs in schools and colleges of technical and further education. In addition, reference was made to the problems of youth unemployment, and some proposals were advanced with respect to the ways in which educational institutions might modify their approaches to meet these continuing problems. Furthermore, the Committee indicated that all was not well with the secondary schools in Australia, and that some rethinking of the programs of secondary schools, particularly at the upper secondary level, would need to be undertaken if the schools were to adjust successfully to the changing expectations of youth and of society. In later chapters of this report, it will thus be necessary to extend some of the arguments already presented in the first report. There are, however, two further aspects of change that should be taken into consideration by those responsible for the planning of the curriculum of schools. First, there is the preparation for and the promotion of technological change, and secondly there is the accommodation and anticipation of societal change. Each is important, and each requires a very different reaction on the part of the schools.

## Technological Change

3.11 In Chapter 3 of the first report of the Committee attention was drawn to the confusion that appeared to exist in the South Australian community with respect to the advantages and disadvantages of any promotion of technological change[17]. No part of Australia will be isolated or immune from such change. However, it is of great importance to the State of South Australia that it should anticipate such change and use technology to raise the level of productivity within the State. The long term ability of South Australia to obtain maximum benefits from technology and reduce its adverse consequences will depend on the provision of appropriate education and training for the members of the South Australian community. We believe that the contribution of science and technology to the State's prosperity and development will rest on two bases. First, there is the level of competence and inventiveness of the scientists, engineers and technologists who design and develop new systems.

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[17] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp.3-16 to 3-19.

This level of competence will be a direct consequence of the nature and extent of education that is provided. Secondly, there is a significant proportion of the adult population, who have no direct involvement with science and technology, and yet they are indirectly involved through the influence that they can exert on industrial and governmental sources of funding for scientific and technological development. They need to understand important national decisions relating to the use of new technologies, to be assured that sufficient safeguards are incorporated into new technological developments and thus to ensure that no hazards to individuals or the environment exist. These people will need some knowledge of science and technology, but not at a detailed or specialist level. The types of curricula that might be provided in the schools to develop these two bases on which the prosperity of the State will ultimately depend will need to be examined in detail at later stages in this report.

## Societal Change

3.12 There are many aspects of Australian society that are in the process of change, and in Chapter 3 of our first report we drew attention to some of these aspects including changing participation by women in the workforce, changing family structures and the changing ethnic composition of our society[18]. There are, however, other changes of consequence such as our changing relationships with neighbouring countries in South East Asia, our changing lifestyles, and our changing access to information as well as the amount of information that is becoming available to assist in decision making. In addition, there is the changing nature of education itself, which once tended to follow societal change, but is now increasingly expected to influence such change. Graduates of our schools and colleges should have a greater knowledge of how our society works and a deeper understanding of the development of our society and of individuals within our society. In response to these societal changes, Skilbeck has argued for a view of the curriculum as a kind of a map, a socio-cultural map, of the world or society in which we live.[19] Such a curriculum would have a strong societal orientation, and would be highly sophisticated and highly complex. Boyer has also argued in Australia for a central integrating purpose for education, that would help "all students to gain a perspective and see themselves in relation to other people, other

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18. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp.3-19 to 3-24.
19. Skilbeck, M. The Implications of Societal Change for the Curriculum. In P.H. Karmel (ed.), Education, Change and Society. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1981.

times and other forms of life".[20] The view presented by Skilbeck of the curriculum is not unrelated to Boyer's integrating purpose for education, since in order for individuals to see themselves as Boyer would ask, the context in which they live must be thoroughly explored. This would seem to be the process of mapping that Skilbeck had in mind. These are grand views of education. However, we must remember that no longer is education seen as a process confined to 10 years of schooling. Education continues through a lifetime, and the development of an understanding by individuals of their place in a complex socio-cultural setting is something that will commence during the later years of schooling, and will gradually develop as each individual lives a complete life which involves continuing education, work and leisure. The further exploration of this area may or may not involve traditional modes of education in formal institutions. Moreover, there will be increasing opportunities for non-traditional modes of education that will take place in ways that differ from those currently employed in formal educational programs.

## Non-Formal Education

3.13 The possibilities of fostering non-traditional modes of education and the development of non-formal approaches to education that we have referred to in the previous paragraph are likely to be greatly enhanced by new systems of communication. Such possibilities will probably be developed by educators working outside the school system. However, it is possible that tertiary education is still fluid enough for universities and colleges to engage in developmental work in the field of non-formal education. Nevertheless, it may be necessary for the media, particularly television and telecommunication systems, to recognize and undertake new roles as technology is developed to make non-formal methods of education a reality through the use of telecommunication networks and computer based systems of learning and instruction. It is now possible that the new frontiers of education will be in the field of non-formal education and outside the educational institutions of schools, colleges, and universities as we know them.

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[20] Boyer, E.L. Education for a Complete Life. In P.H. Karmel (ed.), Education, Change and Society. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1981, p.237.

# CHAPTER 4

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

### Curriculum Review

4.1 The Karmel Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in its report in 1971 accepted, in principle, that a degree of autonomy should be given to schools and colleges to determine appropriate curricula for their students. It then turned to consider the procedures that were employed and that might be employed in the future to review curricula and teaching methods. The Committee saw clearly the need for such review, for modification of practices and for planned revision through programs of dissemination and inservice education associated with new and improved curricula and teaching methods[1]. However, it is the view of this present Committee that current policies and practices have not worked well and some of the deficiencies that the Committee has noted are listed below.

4.2 In advancing criticism of the administrative structures of the Education Department and the Department of Further Education and the practices adopted for the review of curricula, we recognize that the structures that have been built up have arisen from earlier ones. Furthermore, over the past decade, there has been a change from the obligatory use of centrally prescribed syllabuses and courses of instruction to the use of curricula developed largely within schools.

1. It was proposed by the Karmel Committee that an Advisory Council of Education should be established and that it should report every five years to the Minister of Education on the purposes, curriculum and methods of the schools of South Australia. The Advisory Council has not been established. The report that has been prepared and published under the title Into the 80s Our Schools and their Purposes was prepared largely by Departmental staff and is not an independent appraisal of the curricula and teaching methods employed in the schools. It may be argued that the present Committee is undertaking the tasks of appraisal of the curricula and teaching methods of the schools and colleges, but this aspect is not directly stated in the Committee's terms of reference and necessarily

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[1] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971, op. cit., p.520.

must only form a small part of its work. It is evident that plans for a systematic review such as advocated by the Karmel Committee still need to be developed.

2. At the time of the Karmel Committee, there were in existence two Advisory Curriculum Boards. The Committee proposed that in order to fulfil better their tasks these Boards should have wider representation of lay and scholarly interests. In recent years the two Advisory Curriculum Boards have been combined into one, and it is evident to the Committee that this Board does not function well. It is unfortunate that the Chairman is the Director of Curriculum, and that the Board's debates are largely dominated by members of the Curriculum Directorate and members of the educational service. The Board had some say in the preparation of the Into the 80s statement, but would appear to recognize that it lacks purpose and direction in its meetings. Clearly the Board does not provide an effective forum for debate and discussion of the issues relating to the curriculum of the schools to which the Director-General and Minister of Education can turn for advice.

3. The Karmel Committee recommended that subject committees should be maintained at both primary and secondary levels to develop courses of study and to design syllabuses of instruction[2]. We note that there are currently 31 such committees, of which only six are concerned solely with aspects of the primary and junior primary school curriculum. Considerable restructuring of these committees has taken place in recent years, and they have been greatly reduced in number and the time commitment demanded of their members has also been decreased. Nevertheless, there is no body which has oversight of the curriculum of the primary schools. Furthermore, the curriculum committees which operate across the grade range R-12 are dominated, in the main, by persons with a secondary school background and the staff from the Curriculum Directorate who service the committees largely have secondary school interests.

4. The Karmel Committee envisaged that the Research Branch would, amongst other interests, be concerned with curriculum matters and with evaluation of schools and school curricula and that the members of the Branch engaged in curriculum matters would work in co-operation with the staff of the

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[2] ibid. pp.519-520.

Curriculum Directorate[3]. The Karmel Committee also saw the possibility of conflicting responsibilities between these two sections in the initiation and development of change in curricula and teaching methods[4]. It would appear to this present Committee that co-operation does not take place, neither does direct conflict. Each section would appear to be pursuing its own ends, largely ignoring the other.

5. The Committee in its first report stated that the present Curriculum Directorate "would appear to be unwieldy and to lack a specific focus on the improvement of the curriculum of the schools"[5]. However, it provided little evidence to support this contention deriving its criticism from both the Report of the Restructure Review Working Party[6] and the Report of the Public Accounts Committee,[7] which in turn drew upon the former report. The Committee had noted the shortcomings of the work of the Directorate that were commented upon by the Restructure Review Working Party with regard to curriculum implementation. The shortcomings were associated with insufficient cohesion between the Curriculum Directorate and the Regions. As a consequence the spread of new ideas, methods and courses was seen to be uncertain and somewhat erratic. The Committee has since had the opportunity to look more closely at the Directorate and its work and has noted the large number of small units that are currently operating and the large number of separate subject committees that meet regularly. It endorses to the full the comments and criticisms of the Restructure Review Working Party that the curriculum units are working in competition for limited resources, and each is pursuing its own aims and objectives according to its own priorities. Moreover, the Curriculum Committees are able to carry on a number of functions at will and contrary to the priorities assigned by the Curriculum Co-ordinating Committee, which has been set up to have oversight and management responsibilities across the whole area of curriculum development and implementation.

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[3] ibid. p.520.

[4] ibid. p.515-517.

[5] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., p.8-9.

[6] South Australia, Education Department. Report of Restructure Review Working Party, April 1980, Chapter 4.

[7] Public Accounts Committee. Report on Accountability in the Education Department and Schools, December 1980, pp.95-101.

6. From its visits to schools the Committee learnt of the delays in obtaining course outlines and curriculum materials that had been under development for some time. On the one hand, there was a great deal of unauthorized photocopying being carried out of materials that were being developed, and on the other hand there were stories of difficulties being encountered in publishing the materials required for use in schools. There appeared to the Committee to be a lack of tightly specified production and publication schedules to ensure that the materials being developed would be available for use in schools as rapidly as possible.

4.3 The Committee must express its concern that the structures set up by the Education Department for curriculum development and review of curricula and teaching methods, while an issue of significance to the Karmel Committee and one addressed in some detail, do not appear to be working satisfactorily. These structures clearly require considerable re-examination and re-organization.

4.4 While the Committee is primarily concerned with curriculum development within the Education Department and its schools, it must be recognized that the curricula and materials used in the government schools are also widely used by those working in the non-government schools. Thus it is not inappropriate that the non-government schools should be represented on curriculum committees and in some cases involved in a co-operative and collaborative manner in the work of curriculum and materials development. An important issue arises as to whether the non-government schools should have total freedom to determine their own curricula at all levels or whether some curricular guidelines should be established for non-government schools to follow. In the past, there have been few problems in this area, but with the establishment of a large number of small schools, it is clearly becoming necessary to ensure that such schools have an effective curriculum and are employing sound and efficient teaching methods. At this stage it is sufficient to note that questions which must be raised with regard to the curriculum of the government schools have some bearing on and relevance for the non-government school sector.

## Curriculum Development

4.5 Curriculum development and planning can take place at three distinct levels within an education system. These are the central or systemic level, the individual school level and the level of the individual teacher within the school. Prior to recent years, in South Australian government schools, curriculum development had taken place at the central level and there was bureaucratic control to ensure the adoption of the curricula in the schools and classrooms. Following the issuing of the memorandum by the then Director-General in August 1970, which has been referred to in Chapter 3, the schools have had the freedom and the authority to develop their own curricula. It has also been possible for teachers to take the freedom that has been formally given to the school and its Principal and to teach courses of their own design. The exteat to which this has happened in South Australia is unclear. However, in some other parts of Australia it has become a relatively widespread practice for teachers to teach courses they have developed themselves independently of other teachers in a school. There are also four broad forms in which the products of curriculum development may be prepared for use in schools. First, there are statements of the broad general aims of education. An example of such a general statement is provided by the recently issued document Into the 80s. The second form in which the products of curriculum development can be distributed is that of a detailed statement of curriculum objectives and syllabus guidelines. While this form does not refer solely to subjects within the curriculum, and can be used for the whole of the curriculum at a particular year or grade level, in general, it applies to statements associated with each subject. The third form is a detailed statement of the organization and content of the course to be taught, sometimes with recommendations on the methods to be employed in teaching certain aspects of the course. Finally, there are student texts and workbooks with accompanying teacher's guides that cover in detail the content and material to be taught. An excellent example of materials of this fourth kind are the Australian Science Education Project (ASEP) materials which were developed in a co-operative way with resources from the Commonwealth and the six States. The extent to which a system can develop and implement materials of the fourth kind outlined above will vary depending on the resources available, the priority ascribed to the curriculum area, and the relevance perceived by the schools and teachers of the materials developed.

4.6 The process of curriculum development can be extremely expensive particularly if carried through to the preparation of the fourth kind of curriculum materials referred to above. However, any aspect of curriculum development is expensive if it involves starting from the beginning to construct totally new curriculum materials. The preparation of something that is completely new and different from what was previously being used in schools demands caution not only on the grounds of the expense involved, but also because teachers are, in general, conservative and are reluctant to change from what they have become accustomed to doing. Teachers do not learn easily new approaches and new skills. The ASEP materials provide an excellent example of a major curriculum development enterprise, since in South Australia there has been a satisfactory level of adoption of the materials. The modular approach of the ASEP materials was a departure from a course packaged within one text book. The use of the ASEP materials involved a great deal more student and teacher activity than had been customary in South Australian schools. As a consequence of intensive inservice programs and the preparation of excellent teacher support materials, many teachers in the State were led to make use of some of the published material. However, many new teachers did not receive any preparation in the use of the ASEP materials, and the work of inservice training had to become an ongoing task, if the materials were to continue to be used. There is much hard work to be done on the introduction of new approaches if they involve a significant departure from current practice.

4.7 The development of a completely new course or program involves a lengthy series of tasks which can readily occupy a period of up to eight years from the time that the idea is first conceived to the time that published materials are used in schools. The first task has a clearly defined research component which involves an analysis and survey of need. This is followed by a detailed review of other work that has been undertaken in the area. Both influence the making of the decision whether or not to proceed with curriculum development. Once a decision is made to proceed to further stages, it is necessary to specify the general aims and purposes of the planned development. This leads on to the detailed specification of curriculum objectives and to the more detailed planning of the organization and content of the curriculum. Subsequently there is the writing of outlines for the instructional material followed by the preparation of the material, its initial trial in a few classrooms and its subsequent modification. The next task is to plan an extensive field trial in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum material and to determine the optimal conditions for the program. After the field trial the materials will require further revision and possibly further trial before editing for initial publication, and being made available for widespread use. However, the curriculum development project does not stop at this point, as it is necessary to plan the implementation and to conduct a series of inservice courses before the materials are introduced into schools. There is also a need for the provision of a continuing service to the teachers after the materials have been introduced. It is acknowledged that the usage of the materials can readily deteriorate if there is not some quality control of their introduction and use. Sometimes, the curriculum development program is of sufficient importance that a series of evaluation studies are undertaken to provide evidence of the successful, or otherwise, implementation of the program. Such a series of evaluation studies will of course provide evidence for the subsequent revision of the curriculum materials.

4.8 In the past 20 years there has been a very large number of curriculum development projects undertaken in many parts of the world. They have frequently succeeded or failed according to whether or not they omitted one or more steps in the series of tasks of development outlined above. In Australia, the most successful curriculum development enterprise has been the *Web of Life* textbook in Biology produced by the Australian Academy of Science. It has succeeded because the need was there and was rightly assessed, because it built on an already successful American program, and because it has survived for a long enough period to permit successive revisions of the materials to be carried out. Curriculum development is an elaborate and costly operation if it is undertaken in this way. However, if the materials developed are widely enough used the financial returns make it commercially viable and the educational gains can be very significant.

4.9 It is clear that, because of the costs involved, any full-scale curriculum development program should only be undertaken in Australia, if there is nation-wide support for it, and if there is evidence of need that will guarantee widespread adoption at the end of the cycle of curriculum development. The planned dissolution of the Curriculum Development Centre greatly reduces the likelihood of a major curriculum development program being established again in Australia. There are, however, many who would argue that such an undertaking should not be embarked upon for other reasons. Nevertheless, it would appear improbable that in future such major curriculum development enterprises will be set up. Consequently, more gradual evolution of curricula must be envisaged, rather than widespread curriculum reform.

4.10 A school system that accepts a policy of school based curriculum development might well be giving its schools an unmanageable task. The tasks of curriculum development are extremely time-consuming. In addition, teachers require training in curriculum development, which they have not been able to obtain because appropriate courses have not been available. Perhaps, in practice, the system merely leaves to each school the right to choose from among the commercially available texts and materials the combination that it wishes to use. Because good school texts are costly, only the school with ample resources will choose appropriate sets of materials. If the school system itself has limited resources available, it will be unable to supply each school with all the resources it might wish to provide, and the school will be unable to obtain the high quality text books and educational materials it needs. School texts which involve a low level of cost are commonly relatively simple, ineffective and unattractive publications. More attractive publications, which are sold at moderate cost, are commonly imported from overseas and sometimes are not completely suitable for use in Australian schools. Yet, an educational system has an obligation to ensure that its schools use high quality curricular materials, but at a price level that the school and the system can afford. Clearly there would be economies if in certain areas all schools were to use the same curricular materials.

4.11 A further problem arises from the now common transfer of students and teachers from one school to the next. There are certain subject areas for which a common program across a system and in some cases across Australia would be desirable. However, it is rare, as was possible with the Web of Life Biology text, for one course to be accepted, in the main, across the country. Few texts and curriculum materials gain universal acceptance. On the one hand, this could be unfortunate, and the consequences of pedantry and prejudice could be educationally damaging. On the other hand, it could prevent a much vaunted program that is basically unsatisfactory being too widely accepted.

4.12 In the course of this enquiry, many requests have been received from schools and practising teachers for a return to some recommended courses of instruction and the provision of some high quality curricular materials that have been produced at the system level and at reasonable cost for use in schools. These requests must be taken into consideration in the planning of school curricula for the future. It would consequently seem desirable to withdraw in part from the full implementation of policies of school based curriculum development, and rather establish policies which provide at certain stages of schooling and in certain curriculum areas for the development of recommended curricula and curriculum materials for use in schools. It is not proposed that recommended curricula should be available in all areas of the curriculum or apply to the same extent at all stages of schooling, but that where considered appropriate such recommended curricula should be re-introduced. It need not be obligatory for all schools to adopt recommended curricula and curriculum materials, but if they did not wish to adopt such curricula and materials, they should be required to gain approval for the use of appropriate alternatives.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.1 the Education Department should be responsible for the preparation of recommended curricula and curriculum materials which would be used by schools within the Department unless approval was given for the use of appropriate alternatives.

In later stages of this report the Committee will indicate examples of stages of schooling and areas of the curriculum where it considers such recommended curricula and curriculum materials might well be introduced. It will also advance proposals for a systematic review of the curricula used in schools.

### Reviews of School Curricula

4.13 In order for the curricula developed in schools to gain approval it would be necessary for the work of the school and its teaching programs to be reviewed on a regular basis. Each school would need to maintain systematic records of its use of recommended curricula, and detailed statements of the aims, objectives and guidelines of the courses of instruction that replaced recommended curricula. During a review of the school these records and curriculum statements would be examined and assessed. However, since curriculum development in schools is a continuing process, it is inevitable that changes would occur in the curricula used within schools between the times when reviews were conducted. Consequently, it would seem essential that an approval procedure should be developed by means of which the School Council and the Principal of the school should give interim approval, after examination, to all curricula developed within a school, and copies of all curriculum documents should be lodged with the Regional Director. Approval would be recommended for such curricula at the time of a review of the school. The recommendation for approval would be forwarded to the Regional Director who would authorize approval on behalf of the Director-General of Education. In cases where approval was not recommended the Regional Director would be empowered to require a return to the use of recommended curricula. Further details on the nature of such a review will be considered in Chapter 13 of this report.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.2 (a) the curricula of each school should be reviewed on a regular basis;

(b) during a review the curriculum records of the school should be examined and, where appropriate, approval recommended for the continued use of the curriculum program of the school to the Regional Director who would authorize approval on behalf of the Director-General of Education;

(c) where the school chose to replace a recommended curriculum with a course developed within the school, such a course would be granted interim approval by the School Council and Principal of the school and copies of all curriculum documents would be lodged with the Regional Director; and

(d) at the time of a review of the school the review panel would examine the curriculum documents for which interim approval had been given and would, where considered appropriate, recommend approval of such curricula to the Regional Director who would authorize approval on behalf of the Director-General of Education.

## Some Changes in Structures

4.14 As is consistent with the above discussion and recommendation the Committee endorses Recommendation R8.2 which it made in its first report. This Recommendation proposed that a Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should be set up to prepare among other tasks curriculum guidelines and the necessary curriculum materials. What the Committee envisages is a Directorate under the Deputy Director-General (Resources) that would have responsibility for the production of curriculum guidelines and curriculum materials. The committee does not envisage that this can be undertaken satisfactorily without both supporting research and evaluation activities. The Committee would also envisage that attached to this Directorate would be persons holding appointments at the level of Principal Education Officer or Superintendent who were conveners of Curriculum Committees in the eight curriculum areas modified from the Into the 80s statement. In addition, there would be persons responsible for Curriculum Committees in the areas of Junior Primary Education (including the pre-primary programs), Primary Education, and such additional areas as from time to time might be considered necessary. Each of the Curriculum Committees associated with the eight curriculum areas would have oversight of the curriculum in its particular area across Years R-12. The Committee, however, proposes that matters relating to Environmental Education should be included under the area of Science and Technology, that the area of Health and Personal Development be changed to Health and Physical Development and that a new area be set up which would be concerned with Moral Reasoning and Values. The Committee also proposes that the Curriculum Committee which was set up to cover the field of Primary Education would have an assigned purpose of co-ordinating and integrating proposed programs in the eight curriculum areas into a total program for education in primary schools. The Committee notes that the Junior Primary Education area, which includes both pre-primary and junior primary programs, already benefits from being seen as an integrated area. Accordingly the members of each Curriculum Committee in the course of their normal duties and jointly as a Committee would be expected to develop statements of curriculum aims, curriculum objectives and curriculum guidelines. These documents would be published or circulated to the regional offices and schools. In addition, each Committee would advance from time to time proposals for curriculum planning and materials development that required a sustained program and the efforts of a team of full-time curriculum developers. While these Curriculum Committees would have as convener a Superintendent or Principal Education Officer, this convener may or may not be Chairman of the Committee. It would be appropriate for each Committee to choose from amongst its members a person to be Chairman, who had the necessary background, qualifications and knowledge of curriculum development, so that the Committee was not subordinate to the members of the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation serving on the Committee. Each Committee would comprise an appropriate blend of persons from government and non-government schools at the different levels, persons with particular expertise in the area, and persons from teacher pre-service and inservice education institutions.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.3 Curriculum Committees should be set up in each of the eight specified curriculum areas with two additional Committees in the areas of Junior Primary Education and Primary Education. Each of the specified Committees would be responsible for the development and review of curricula in its specific area, and the Junior Primary Education Committee and the Primary Education Committee would be responsible for the development of a co-ordinated and integrated program across the eight curriculum areas.

4.15 The Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation would contain within it between four and ten teams of persons, who would be appointed to work full-time on the development of curriculum materials as requested by Curriculum Committees. Thus it would be possible for each of the Curriculum Committees, if resources permitted, to commission a specific and intensive program of curriculum development. However, it would not normally be expected that every Curriculum Committee would have such a program in operation at any one time. Each commissioned curriculum development project would be undertaken for a limited period of time, perhaps of three years. The Curriculum Committee would develop detailed proposals for the operation of the project and would keep detailed records of the costs of the project. In general, each project team would consist of three to five curriculum developers and would have adequate clerical support staff depending on the phase of the project. Each project would have clearly specified production and publication schedules. Unless such detailed project plans were available from the outset of the project it would be inappropriate for the project to proceed. From time to time, additional funds might be made available for curriculum development from Commonwealth Government sources. Such funds should only be used within the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation if they were being spent on a curriculum project of the type outlined above, that was consistent with the priorities of a particular Curriculum Committee. Where possible, collaboration with other States should be fostered under the auspices of Australia-wide agencies, such as the Curriculum Development Centre, but only on projects that would operate in the manner outlined above. The Committee sees enormous benefits flowing from joint curriculum development projects between the States and would support the setting up of planned and co-ordinated curriculum development projects.

Accordingly, the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.4 (a) within the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation, between four and ten curriculum development project teams could be established at any one time, depending on the resources available, to undertake specific and planned tasks of curriculum development in the ten curriculum areas specified above; and

(b) the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should initiate jointly with other Australian States specific and planned tasks of curriculum development.

4.16 The Committee does not suggest that all activities of staff of the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation will lead to major curriculum changes. In many cases there will be only minor changes to the statements of the general aims of education, detailed statements of curriculum objectives, and detailed curriculum guides providing information on curriculum organization and content. It is envisaged that the Curriculum Committees will keep these statements under constant review and will make amendments when and where they think minor changes are appropriate. From time to time, however, there will be major changes to these curriculum statements as well as the development of new curriculum materials for teacher and student use.

## Curriculum Dissemination and Implementation

4.17 The present staff of the Curriculum Directorate holds the view that the implementation of any proposed curriculum changes and the dissemination of the new statements and materials developed is an important function for the Directorate to undertake. Consequently they reject the view that the work of curriculum development should be largely divorced from that of curriculum implementation. Thus those engaged in curriculum development are spending a substantial part of their time on dissemination activities. There is little doubt that programs of inservice education associated with curriculum change have a pivotal role in the introduction and implementation of proposed changes. Furthermore, many excellent reforms in school curricula have failed because the necessary ideas have not been adequately conveyed to those who teach in the schools. Nevertheless, the task of dissemination is too great for the curriculum developer to accept responsibility for it. Mechanisms must be set up through which information and materials are passed to the schools and from the schools to each teacher within. It is evident that the Curriculum Committees in each of the curriculum areas must have the responsibility not only for commissioning and planning curriculum change and the preparation of suitable statements and materials for the implementation of change, but they must also have an established network that enables the necessary ideas and materials to be disseminated to every school in the State.

4.18 The Committee in its first report endorsed the delegation of many administrative responsibilities to the regional offices and in addition proposed the further devolution of duties from the central administration to the regional offices. One of the tasks that the Committee believes can be more effectively undertaken from the regional offices is the dissemination of information about curriculum matters through the advisory service staff working in each region. However, large teams of advisory staff do not seem to serve a useful function unless they are assembled for a specific task of curriculum reform for a very limited period of time. The more effective alternative would be to establish a network of agencies at the regional level to provide, not merely a one-way flow of information from the curriculum developers and the central Curriculum Committees to the schools, but to provide an effective two-way flow of information from the schools to the central Curriculum Committees and the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation. There will always be some teachers and school principals who would prefer direct access to a central Curriculum Committee, to the staff of the Directorate and to the curriculum developers, fearing a corruption of ideas in the process of transmission through a network. However, in a system the size of the South Australian Education Department, the direct access approach could not work for all members of the teaching service. Consequently, the system must plan for the more effective dissemination of information than has been in operation in recent years. In part, the lesser effectiveness of dissemination activities has resulted not from a reduced quality of the ideas or materials, nor from the nature of the endeavours of those who have been engaged in programs of implementation, but rather from a removal of the need for an active seeking out by the schools of information and materials from the present Curriculum Directorate. As a consequence of the Freedom and Authority Memorandum of August 1970, the schools have been encouraged to take greater responsibility for developing their own courses of instruction in all areas of the curriculum. This in many respects has been healthy, but it has also served to reduce the two-way interchange between the schools and the Curriculum Directorate. Indeed, the need for schools to purchase those materials which they wished to read and use and which have been published by the Curriculum Directorate has tended to reduce greatly the flow of information and materials from the central administration to the schools and remove the flow of ideas from the schools to the centre. However, this latter flow from the schools to the centre has been achieved by the curriculum developers engaging in lengthy consultative exercises at every stage in their work. These consultative activities are important, but it is our view that the sense of partnership between the schools and the Curriculum Directorate needs strengthening through the establishment of a more substantial and permanent network of agencies at the regional level. The symptoms that we have detected of this need arise from the pleas from the schools that we have visited for more information and material on curriculum developments in such areas as primary school mathematics.

4.19 The agencies that the Committee would propose at the regional level would not be those of regional curriculum committees, because such committees would provide relatively limited coverage of the interested groups within a region. It would seem more appropriate to establish a Regional Conference in each of the ten curriculum areas that would have a wide coverage of all schools in a region and that would meet for a day prior to the commencement of each school term. From the Regional Conference smaller Regional Working Parties would be set up to investigate the issues under consideration and advance solutions to the problems raised.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.5 (a) a network of Regional Curriculum Conferences should be established in each of the 10 currently proposed curriculum areas and in each of the 10 regions to maintain a two-way flow of information and materials between the central Curriculum Committees and the schools;

(b) where information and materials from curriculum development programs within the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation are to be implemented within the schools, appropriate inservice education activities should be set up within the regions which would be planned and co-ordinated by the Regional Curriculum Conferences;

(c) Regional Conferences would, when required, establish Working Parties to give consideration to particular issues; and

(d) the needs of the schools for curriculum change should be identified and debated by the Regional Curriculum Conferences and their Working Parties and the information obtained in this way should be communicated to the central Curriculum Committees.

4.20 There could be a danger in the establishment of Regional Curriculum Conferences and Working Parties in each of the eight curriculum areas, concerned with the curriculum across Years R-12, that the work of the Conferences would be dominated by persons whose interest was primarily in the program of the upper secondary school. However, the Committee believes that it is important that a coherent curriculum should be planned across Years R-12 and it believes that the central Curriculum Committees should plan across the full range of the years of schooling. From time to time Working Parties should be set up by both the central Curriculum Committees and the Regional Curriculum Conferences, with limited life, to examine particular curriculum issues that would be of interest only to those concerned with a particular stage of schooling and thus only to a limited group of the members of the Committee or Conference. These Working Parties would not necessarily be dominated by persons concerned with upper secondary school programs, and the issues relevant to other levels of schooling would in this way receive appropriate consideration.

## Curriculum Services

4.21 Within the present Curriculum Directorate there are no less than 38 branches, centres, units and service groups together with some sections such as the Correspondence School and School of the Air that are not reported on within the 1980 Annual Report of the Directorate[8]. The organization chart of the Directorate is a complex tree of inter-related units. While some of the branches, centres, units and service groups serve a specific purpose relating primarily to curriculum development others have an advisory service role such as the Physical Education Branch together with certain administrative duties that it performs in relation to the schools in the regions. The Report of the Restructure Review Working Party recommended that a new directorate should be set up comprising Curriculum Services and Resources[9]. In the short term this may be an appropriate way to make adequate provision for the administration of this multiplicity of independent units. Nevertheless, in the long term, this Committee believes that such units need to be tightly linked with the work in the schools rather than operating as discrete units carrying out a number of functions at will and campaigning with a blaze of publicity in the press when the occasion demands[10]. The most effective way to orient these units more closely with the work of the schools is to link these branches, centres, units and special groups with structures set up for the administration of the regional offices, and where possible to reduce the staff working in this multiplicity of bodies thereby requiring them to work more directly with schools through the regional offices. There are of course some bodies, such as the Guidance and Special Services Branch, that have relocated as many staff as possible in the regional offices, but also need to maintain expertise in a central group to ensure that the work in the regions is as effective as possible. Furthermore, there are some services such as the Zoo Education Service that is so small and so specific in its orientation that its activities can not easily be devolved to the regional offices. The Committee believes that where possible staff from these branches, centres, units and special groups should work from the regional offices and as closely as possible with schools and with teachers. In order to achieve this the Committee in its first report saw a need for a thorough re-examination of each body and a reconsideration of its structure and its function, since it anticipated that the constraints imposed by the budget of the Education Department would demand that a re-examination of each and every branch, centre, unit or service group would need to take place in the immediate future. Furthermore, the Committee saw that in restructuring this area the only way in which it would be possible to link the curriculum services effectively with the schools would be to maintain this area directly under the Deputy Director-General (Schools), to appoint a Director of Regional Services of ultimately the same standing as the Regional Directors and to cluster these branches, centres, units and service groups into a Regional Services Division. Notwithstanding this, it is anticipated that wherever possible staff should be relocated or should work much of their time in the regions.[11]

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[8] South Australia, Education Department, Curriculum Directorate. Annual Report 1980. Adelaide: Government Printer, 1981.

[9] South Australia, Education Department. Report of the Restructure Review Working Party. 1980, op. cit., para.4.47-4.78.

[10] The Advertiser, 13 December 1980, by the Correspondence School and The Advertiser, 19 November 1980.

4.22 In the restructuring of this area consideration must be given to distinguishing between work that is advisory in nature and work that is essentially administrative in nature. Furthermore, it is clear that some branches, centres, units or special groups, when set up, should have a highly specific program to carry out and a clearly specified period of life. For example, the Angle Park Computing Centre has beyond question carried out its work enthusiastically and extremely well and has been able to promote the use of computers in the schools across the State. Its main function is to get computers into schools and working in an effective and educational way. Clearly the time will come, within a few years, when this field of activity will be so large and so complex that a single centre will not be able to handle the work efficiently. The Computing Centre staff should see their task as one of limited duration, perhaps leading to new structures located in schools or regions, to foster and promote the sound educational use of computers in schools. The Committee would not wish to detract from the work undertaken by this Centre, but an issue is raised here that the Committee will examine in greater detail in Chapter 8 of this report.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.6 (a) a thorough re-examination should be undertaken of the purposes and functions of each branch, centre, unit and special group within the Curriculum Directorate with a view to relocating the staff and many of the functions performed by these bodies within regional offices and possibly re-establishing some as schools within a region;

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[11] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., Chapter 8.

(b) the remaining and restructured branches, centres, units and special groups should form a Regional Services Division that would be linked as closely as is possible with the regional directorates that they serve; and

(c) the Regional Services Division should be responsible to the Deputy Director-General (Schools) and that the administrative head of the Division should ultimately be appointed at the level of assistant director, equivalent in status to colleagues - the Directors of the Regional Directorates.

## The Costs of Services

4.23 Many of these branches and centres currently perform special services for both government and non-government schools. The cost estimated by the Education Department of the services supplied at no charge to the non-government schools is approaching one million dollars. However, there is little recognition or appreciation of the magnitude of the cost to the State of providing such services to both the government and non-government schools. The Committee proposed in its first report that there should be a charge made for these special services to the non-government schools on a cost-sharing basis.[12] If this policy were to be adopted then it would also seem appropriate that a charge should be made for the provision of the same services to government schools. The government schools would need to be provided with an additional grant to enable them to buy services from the branches and centres remaining within the Regional Services Division. Only by making such charges would a sound appreciation be gained of the true need for these services and the cost of providing some services of this kind that are more expensive to provide than is commonly acknowledged.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.7 (a) detailed program costs should be identified for the branches and units within the Regional Services Division;

(b) procedures should be devised by which both government and non-government schools engaging the services of these Regional Services Units would be required to pay for the use of these services;

(c) government schools should be provided with a notional sum that would enable them to purchase the services of the Regional Services Units; and

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[12] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., p.12-14.

(d) the level of charges for services and grants made to schools should be set at a level that would ensure that there was a clear recognition of the costs of such services, so that ineffective and inefficient service provision would gradually be eliminated.

4.24 It would be important too, that the proposed Regional Services Division was not primarily concerned with the implementation and maintenance of the curriculum of the schools. This is clearly a perceived function of the staff of the Regional Directorates. In so far as there may be some branches, centres, units and special groups within the Regional Services Division that maintained an advisory service or an inservice education function, albeit for a limited period of time, some of the duties of staff within this Division would be related to curriculum matters. However, the Committee envisages that the role of these officers would be one of service to the schools, which schools would purchase, and not one that should be in conflict with the program of the Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation Directorate. The Committee will give consideration in greater detail to issues relating to inservice education in Chapter 12 of this report.

## Research and Evaluation

4.25 In its first report the Committee noted that the Report of the Restructure Review Working Party had recommended that the Directorate of Research and Planning should be abolished.[13] The Committee stated that it had not received submissions from the Education Department or from any persons that would effectively counter this strong resolution of the Working Party or that would lead it not to accept the recommendation of the Working Party.[14]. Since that time the Committee has considered further this resolution, and it commends some of the work done within the Directorate of Research and Planning particularly in the area of evaluation of schools. However, these are curriculum oriented activities. While the Committee acknowledges to the full the importance of research and planning activities, the evidence now before the Committee leads it to conclude that insufficient useful purpose is being served by this Directorate in its present form. Consequently, it is clear that such activities do not warrant the maintenance of a separate Directorate concerned with research and planning, and the Committee must continue to recommend accordingly. If a separate unit is set up within the education portfolio for the purposes of research, the work of the unit would be rather more policy and management oriented than is currently accepted or acknowledged by the present Research Section. Following the dis-establishment of the Directorate, the Committee would envisage the staff and program of the Planning Section being transferred to the Directorate of Educational Facilities, and where appropriate the staff and program of the Research Section being transferred to the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation. While in recent years some of the more effective work of the Research Section has been related to curriculum evaluation, the links between the Section and the Curriculum Directorate have been non-existent or at best very tenuous through the occasional membership of a committee within the Curriculum Directorate and the occasional provision of advice on questionnaire construction. The Committee has also noted that the Curriculum Directorate is necessarily engaged in research type activities, but the staff undertaking this work lack both the expertise and the access to advice to carry through the research effectively. It is evident that the linking together of staff working on curriculum research and development would be of considerable benefit.

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[13] South Australia, Education Department, 1980. op. cit., para 6.01.
[14] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., pp. 8-4 to 8-5.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.8 the Directorate of Research and Planning should be dis-established and the staff and functions of the Planning Section should be transferred to the Directorate of Educational Facilities and where appropriate the staff of the Research Section should be transferred to the new Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation.

4.26 The area of curriculum evaluation is seen by the Committee to be one of paramount importance and it would hope that considerably greater emphasis could be given to this area in the future. However, much of the effective work that has been undertaken in South Australia in this area has been limited to certain aspects of the evaluation of schools. There are other aspects of curriculum evaluation that have not been considered adequately within the system. These aspects include the learning achieved by students and the evaluation of the curriculum as a whole in order to indicate areas of the school curriculum that need to be reviewed, modified or replaced. Apart from the passing references to the need for the Education Department "to develop procedures for approving and monitoring school curricula", and "to develop effective strategies for monitoring and attempting to improve the quality of educational programmes in schools", and to the need for the schools to have a "policy on student assessment and reporting", there was no attention given to issues of evaluation or assessment in the publication Into the 80s.[15] These matters are believed by the Committee to be of such consequence that it has proposed that recognition should be given to evaluation in the name of the Directorate concerned with Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation. In addition, the Committee will discuss in some detail the issues of evaluation in a later section of this report, distinguishing between the evaluation of student performance, the evaluation of schools and the evaluation of the system itself. There is, in addition, the question of assessment and evaluation of teacher performance.

## Concerning the Provision of Advice

4.27 The Advisory Curriculum Board has been established under Section 82(2) of the Education Act of 1975. However, the Board was not set up until 1979. The Committee in its first report recommended that an Advisory Council of Education should be established to provide advice to the Minister of Education and to assist in the planning and co-ordination of educational services. The Committee has noted strong opposition to this proposal and it has to acknowledge that the history of an Advisory Council of Education in this State does not auger well for the future. A council had been in existence for some years in South Australia before it was disbanded in 1945, and although the Karmel Committee recommended the re-establishment of a Council, the recommendations were never put into effect.[16] The major differences between the Advisory Curriculum Board and an Advisory Council of Education are that the former provides advice to the Director-General of Education on curriculum matters relating to education in the schools, while the latter would provide advice to the Minister of Education on all matters relating to education in the State. It would be possible for an Advisory Council of Education to be established and for that Council to have two sub-councils, one to provide advice on matters relating to the curriculum of the schools and the other to provide advice on matters relating to the colleges of technical and further education including, it might be assumed, the curricula of the colleges. The latter could, however, overlap in function and possibly in membership with the Industrial and Commercial Training Commission, a body now in existence and directly concerned with courses which provide preparation for employment in the skilled trades.

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15. South Australia, Education Department, 1981. op. cit., pp.34, 40.
16. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971, op. cit., pp 466-468.

It is evident that such Councils and Boards could only work effectively if they were established after careful planning and preparation. First, the person for whom the advice would be provided should wish to receive advice from such a body. Secondly, the Chairman should be able to draw effectively from the members the advice they were able to give. Thirdly, the Council or Board should include a majority of persons from the community who were well-informed on educational matters and who could maintain a balanced perspective on the issues under consideration. A Council or Board containing such persons could prepare those in administrative roles for pending changes in community perceptions of education and provide advice on how to respond in changing circumstances. Likewise, a Council or Board could help in the defence of an institution when it was under unreasonable challenge or threat. Over the past five years the schools in Australia have been challenged by the community as to their purposes and the effectiveness with which they were fulfilling their purposes. Nevertheless, the Advisory Curriculum Board would not appear to have considered this challenge, although in the preparation of the *Into the 80s* statement on schools and their purposes responses from the Advisory Curriculum Board were incorporated. If this Board were to continue to operate then appropriate duties would need to be determined for the Board to ensure that it was able to make what it considered to be a worthwhile contribution. In addition it would be necessary to ensure that the Director-General of Education had an expectation of receiving worthwhile advice from a Board that had strong community representation.

4.28 The Committee in the course of its deliberations has recognized that the Minister of Education and the Directors-General of Education and Further Education have need for a regular flow of advice from the community on major issues relating to the conduct of education in the State. The very existence of the Committee itself was witness to that kind of need. The alternatives for the future are to establish a continuing body or bodies to provide that advice, or to establish at what could be frequent intervals appropriate Committees to operate for short periods of time to provide advice according to specific terms of reference. Most aspects of education are, and will continue to be, lively political issues. It does not seem possible to separate the aspects of education under review from the political world, or to find appropriate persons to give advice through permanent membership of a Board or Council that would not be in some way linked with the political world. Perhaps the Committee was unrealistic in its original proposal to set up an Advisory Council of Education. Perhaps the Act of 1975 was wrong to assume that an

Advisory Curriculum Board could be effective as an ongoing body. It seems more likely, in the political climates that exist throughout Australia today, in which education policy making is becoming increasingly a political issue, that it is more appropriate for short term Committees of Advice to be established to give the Minister and the Directors-General the counsel they require.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R4.9 (a) its former recommendation to establish an Advisory Council of Education should not be implemented for a period of five years and that further consideration be given, after other changes have been introduced, to the need that the Minister might have for the advice that such a Council might provide;

(b) the Advisory Curriculum Board should be reformed for a limited period of time with strong community representation, and with an independent chairman to provide advice to the Director-General of Education on curriculum matters and for the consideration of further papers relating to the Into the 80s statement, and if after a period of three years the Board was still not serving a useful purpose and functioning effectively, it should be disbanded; and

(c) all members of advisory bodies should be adequately recompensed for their services.

Further consideration will be given to the nature and purpose of the Advisory Board for Technical and Further Education in Chapter 9 of this report.

## Responsibility for the Curriculum of the Schools

4.29 In its extensive treatment of curriculum matters in schools the Committee of Enquiry into Education in 1971 supported the retention by the Director-General of Education of responsibility for the curriculum of the schools.[18] However, the Committee argued that, while "curricula and teaching methods, interpreted and used by teachers, are the means by which this responsibility is borne", that was not to say that the Director-General "should be directly responsible for determining curricula and methods as he now is".[19] The Karmel Committee went on to support the thrust developed by the memorandum issued in August 1970 for greater devolution of responsibility to schools and their teachers for the development of curricula. Under the present arrangements the Education Act of 1975 vests in the Director-General the "responsibility for the curriculum in accordance with which instruction is provided in government schools".[20] The Director-General is assisted in his duties by an Advisory Curriculum Board which has been considered in the previous paragraphs.

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[18] Commitee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971, op. cit., p.503.

[19] ibid. p.573.

4.30 In a number of submissions presented to this Committee, arguments were advanced that the present statutory responsibility of the Director-General of Education for curriculum matters should be diminished to enable more direct Ministerial oversight, particularly of the content of curricula in areas of public sensitivity. Such arguments are usually couched in terms of the premise that the Minister is a person who is accountable to the public through his parliamentary position, whereas the Director-General of Education cannot be held accountable in the same manner. Therefore, the argument goes, the Minister should be vested with the ultimate responsibility for the curricula in schools and not the Director-General of Education. The Committee refutes these arguments and favours a retention of the present statutory provision for vesting responsibility for school curricula in the Director-General of Education. Clearly the nature of political processes make it a relatively simple matter for a Minister to be subjected to undue political pressures from a minority interest group. Moreover, it is feasible for such pressure groups to act in ways that the curricula of the schools would be determined not by the interests of the majority but by a small minority. This is not to say that the community should have no influence on curriculum matters. Indeed the Committee believes that the proper channels for community involvement on curriculum matters is through the forum of the School Council and through the Advisory Curriculum Board rather than through political pressure. It is important that a continuity of planned learning experiences be maintained in the schools, and this would appear to be best achieved by the Director-General holding the responsibility for the curricula developed in ways outlined above within the Curriculum Committees and within the schools.

4.31 In rejecting these claims for greater Ministerial oversight of the curricula of the schools, the Committee is not arguing for the insulation of the Director-General of Education from the sorts of pressures alluded to. Parliament will no doubt continue to debate on occasions the school curriculum, and a prudent Director-General will always give due weight and consideration to the views of Parliament. However, the Committee advocates that an Advisory Curriculum Board, with strong community representation instead of one dominated by the staff of the Curriculum Directorate, would provide the most appropriate forum for curriculum matters. Furthermore, to the extent that certain freedom on curriculum matters is allowed at the school level through the approval of curricula by School Councils, it should be possible to ensure that the curricula of the schools are influenced by genuine community concerns. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the Minister and the Government can, through constraining resources, make clear to educational administrators the extent of the freedom and authority held by the Director-General to determine the curricula of the schools. Substantial curriculum change is a costly process, and without the necessary resources relatively little change to school courses could be introduced. Consequently, the Director-General must be circumspect in his actions and cautious in the path that he follows, lest plans are developed for curriculum change that cannot be adequately implemented.

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[20] Education Act, 1975. Section 8.2.

# CHAPTER 5

## EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

### A Changing Perspective in South Australia

5.1 The State Development Council of South Australia has recently released a discussion paper concerned with the planning of a strategy for the future of the State.[1] The report envisages that technological changes in all facets of commerce and industry might be expected to have a substantial impact on the structure of the State's economy in the foreseeable future. It is also made clear that only those countries that actively pursue and adopt new technology will have a competitive advantage on international markets. However, the report is silent on the contribution that education should make in the changing situation. It is the view of the Committee that education at all levels in South Australia, ranging from university to primary school, must change in ways that will lead development, or else education will suffer in a process of adapting and accommodating to the development that will inevitably occur. There is thus a challenging task of advising on changes in education both in response to and in anticipation of new technology, as is required of this Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia by its terms of reference. However, a response is required at a time when the nature and rate of introduction of such technological change is unclear and uncertain.

5.2 The issues to be considered in an educational context fall into three main classes. The first set of issues is concerned with both the function of educational institutions in a situation where new technology is penetrating into the economic, social and cultural life of the State, and how the institutions will themselves change to serve a need for retraining and recurrent education. The second set of issues is related to how educational institutions will use the new technology in their teaching programs and the third set of issues involves the impact of a need to incorporate technological change in the curricula of educational institutions at all levels. In addition, educational institutions must respond to a likely demand for more flexible and less formal approaches to education that will become available through the use of new technology. It is essential from the outset to recognize that while developments in the field of micro-electronics are more immediately obvious because of the now ubiquitous computers, calculators, watches, toys, domestic appliances, and control mechanisms available for the home, the business office, the factory, and the retail outlet as well as the school and classroom, micro-electronics are only one of the many facets of new technology. Of considerable importance is the field of information technology that is not only influencing the storage and retrieval of information in libraries, but has the potential to change radically the procedures employed in banks and offices, particularly in the public service, where form processing, filing, and the transfer of money are tasks readily amenable to change when new and more efficient procedures become available. In addition, the introduction of industrial robots will change the nature of the skilled jobs available in industry; the new energy technologies have the potential to change modes of transport, and the sources of energy for industry and the home; and biological technology will change the production of foods and beverages, health and medical services, plant and animal breeding and raise many issues that will need to be extensively debated in schools, colleges and the wider community.

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[1] South Australia, State Development Council. South Australia - A Strategy for the Future. Adelaide: Government Printer, 1981.

## The Impact of Technological Change on Education

5.3 The Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia has identified three general effects of technological change.[2] First, there will be new employment opportunities created by the introduction of technological change that will require new skills and more flexible approaches to management in industry and commerce. Secondly, there will be indirect economic and employment effects that will result from improved efficiency in the production of goods and services, together with the potential for higher profits and increased wages for employees, that will in turn lead to new avenues of employment. Thirdly, however, there will be important social effects as some employees are displaced and face unemployment and retraining, as well as, for many, a significant reduction in hours of work. This may result in some sectors of society gaining most of the benefits while other sectors bear a markedly disproportionate share of the costs. Each of these three effects will require a response from the education sector. The first effect will require the provision of training in new areas of skill. The second will require the education of a more flexible and adaptable workforce that will respond to a changing situation and will develop new goods and services. The third effect will require new approaches to recurrent education and retraining as well as a greater range of leisure education programs. The major impact of technological change on education will be in the provision of skill training and retraining, as well as in the provision of leisure education programs. Thus the planned developments in the field of technical and further education are of considerable importance. However, from the universities and institutes of technology will come the future leadership in the process of introducing and adjusting to technological change and the contribution of these institutions of higher education cannot be under-emphasized. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that post-secondary educational institutions can only build on the foundations laid down in primary and secondary schools, which will of necessity need to modify their curricula and teaching methods to prepare students for new opportunities and new approaches to learning.

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[2] Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia (Chairman: R.H. Myers). Technological Change in Australia. Canberra: AGPS, 1980, Volume 1.

5.4 In several sections of its report the Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia emphasized the importance of education and training, and it stressed that a wide ranging approach was required:

> The Committee believes that the long-term ability of the Australian community to maximize the benefits of technological change and to minimize the adverse consequences is crucially dependent on the provision of appropriate education and training for all members of the community[3].

Of particular interest are the views of the Committee with respect to certain education issues involving the schools:

> The Committee noted and is concerned about the apparent lack of mathematical training of new primary school teachers. If, as is commonly accepted, many of the basic skills and inclinations towards subject areas are imparted in primary education, then a situation in which a high proportion of teachers has meagre mathematics education is likely to lead to weakness on the part of their pupils in quantitative and analytical skills. The trend away from mathematics and the physical sciences is also of concern in relation to the numbers and standard of students seeking to take tertiary technician and professional courses of direct relevance to technological change[4].

In addition, in considering the need for a National Research and Development Centre for Technical and Further Education that has recently been established in Adelaide, the Committee expressed the view that more could usefully be done to:

- identify likely technological changes that will affect Australian industries
- assess the effects of such tecnnologies on the skills required by existing occupational groups and the need for new categories of workers

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[3] ibid. p.183.

[4] ibid. p.183.

> define the training that will be required to upgrade people in existing categories and to provide new entrants with a relevant basic training.[5]

There is little doubt that systematic study in these three areas is an essential prerequisite for the development of new programs and for the revision of existing courses in colleges of technical and further education in South Australia. Since it is likely that this work will be carried out by the staff of the National Research and Development Centre for Technical and Further Education in Adelaide, it would be redundant for this work also to be undertaken within the Department of Technical and Further Education. Nevertheless the assignment is a formidable one and clearly of some urgency for technical and further education in this State as well as other parts of Australia.

## The Impact of Technology on Teaching

5.5 Unfortunately this Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia must express some reservations about the capacity of the traditional education sector to respond in appropriate ways to the changed perspective that has arisen as a consequence of the development of new technologies. First, the general economic climate does not lend itself to a substantial increase in expenditure on research, and on the creation of new and experimental programs in order to implement change. Secondly, new equipment and ideas have become available that have the potential for use for instructional purposes. However, considerable adaptation and modification are required before widespread use could be made in our schools and homes. This further developmental work is costly and could well be associated with considerable duplication of effort and a lack of compatability and transferability between institutions once the developmental work has been carried out. Thirdly, educational institutions are commonly slow to respond to change of the kind advanced by new technology, partly because of the conservatism of the teaching service, partly because of a sense of threat associated with the suggestion that the machine might replace the teacher, but largely because in the past teachers have seen new devices and equipment introduced into schools and colleges by an enthusiast, which have been left to gather dust on shelves and in cupboards after the enthusiast who introduced them has moved to another institution. However, the reluctance of teachers to foster the use of the electronic calculator in schools, at a time when it is being widely used in the home, the office, and the market place, indicates a tendency to reject technology and to hold to traditional approaches

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5. ibid. p.184.

and methods of instruction and learning. Finally, there is emerging a "non-traditional" approach to education and training which has greater flexibility than that provided by schools, colleges and universities. The types of services vary greatly and range from toy libraries to information exchanges and commercial information installations such as Prestel in the United Kingdom, Télétel in France, and Vista in Canada. However, it is apparent that before widespread use is made of the new technology in education there will be a need for detailed studies of the benefits associated with the use of such procedures.

5.6 One important change that is occurring particularly at the upper secondary school and post-school levels of education is that students are seeking to have greater control over their own learning, including what they learn, how they learn and when they learn. The new technology is likely to make a significant contribution to providing greater flexibility and freedom of choice. It might be expected that the use of more flexible approaches to learning will produce adaptable and self-motivated persons to undertake the new range of tasks required of them in a changing society. Indeed one of the questions that might be asked of a new approach to teaching and learning arising from the introduction of new technology is whether or not it will permit this type of more adaptive learning that would seem to be of greater relevance than the more traditional and formal approaches to instruction that have been used in schools and colleges over the past 100 years. There are the following three purposes by which the introduction of new technology might be assessed, namely: Does the new technology provide:

> increased access to information and does it improve the form in which information is presented;
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> improved learning or more efficient learning among certain groups of individuals; and
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> encouragement towards the development of a capacity for individual self-education?

It is important to note that traditional education is falling behind in its capacity to compete effectively with new audio-visual techniques for providing information. While the interaction between teacher and student that occurs in the classroom is still an important component of student learning, for some students, classroom talk is dull compared with the fast-moving programs of television. The capacity of the new technology to make some aspects of learning more stimulating and more intense must be acknowledged. In addition, it must be recognized that the use of the computer for instructional purposes has the capacity to introduce precision once again into certain aspects of classroom learning. Furthermore, while some equipment might not be appropriate for use with normal children in a classroom, it can have excellent potential for improving the learning of children with specific types of physical handicap as well as with children who are retarded or have other learning disabilities.

5.7 The criticisms advanced by teachers associated with the introduction of new technology into the classroom are expressed in two forms. First, the technology is seen to be likely to destroy the personal interaction that occurs between the student and the teacher in the traditional classroom, with the ultimate threat that the teacher might be replaced by the machine. Secondly, there is commonly criticism of the curricular content of materials that are being used in new types of equipment which arises from the fact that the content does not relate well to the specific curriculum being taught in the school. The cost of developing new materials is high, and it is not easy to maintain good quality. Thus the widespread adoption of new technology in schools and colleges for the purposes of instruction will always be difficult to achieve.

## Technological Change and the Curriculum

5.8 The new approaches and procedures of technology that are likely to become widely used over the next decade, and certainly within the lives of the children who are currently in schools, must have a very significant impact on the curriculum being taught in primary schools. Arithmetical computation in longhand on paper is already a thing of the past in the world of commerce and industry. Yet, as we have already commented, schools have been slow to recognize the trend. The Committee would agree that it is still essential that a student should learn the basic number facts, and should be able to perform the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with some facility. In addition, students should acquire some competence in using the common algorithms for two and three digit numbers, if only to guarantee that such operations are understood. However, extended practice in the use of these algorithms must surely be redundant. It is clearly necessary that students should be encouraged and taught to make approximations to check at all times the meaningfulness of their calculations undertaken on a machine. In addition, it is important that, at an early age, the underlying concepts of programming which are basic to thinking about numbers and operations on numbers should be introduced. Writing in longhand is a skill that will of necessity have to be mastered, but it is clearly going to be of much less importance, if not largely eliminated in adult life, to be replaced by direct keyboard entry and subsequent editing. Thus children in primary schools will increasingly need to develop keyboard skills and to think and type freely at the keyboard. Reading will, we suggest, remain an essential skill, but students will need to develop greater facility in scanning to identify relevant information as it is presented on a screen. Consequently, the skills of sorting and sifting information and exercising choice in order to select the appropriate items of information must be expected to become increasingly important as new information systems are developed. These are all skills that will need to be initiated in primary school and mastered prior to the completion of secondary schooling.

5.9 Perhaps the most challenging task for education in response to the advent of new technology is the provision of programs of familiarization with the new approaches during the years of secondary schooling to ensure that the coming generation is aware of the technology and of its consequences for society, if wisely used. Furthermore, it will be necessary to develop an awareness of the evolving nature of much of the new equipment and procedures so that a maximum degree of adaptability and flexibility of thinking is maintained for the future. In South Australia, at the present time, little has been done to develop this type of familiarization with technology in schools. Clearly there is a need for curriculum development to be initiated in this area, and more detailed consideration will be given to these matters in Chapter 8 of this report. What we have in mind is not merely the development of some familiarity with computers and some skill in programming, but rather the development of an awareness of the issues that will arise in our society, its economy and its culture as a consequence of technological change. However, for many there could well be provided an opportunity to have direct experience with simple computers, or with terminals on line to a larger computer knowing that an increasing number of homes are likely to have access to such equipment during the coming decade. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that the provision of such experiences and the introduction of such matters into the school curriculum is not an alternative to a sound training in mathematics and the sciences.

5.10 The most extensive curricular changes in areas of concern to the Committee will be associated with the courses and programs offered by colleges of technical and further education. These colleges will need to provide the training in skills necessary to exploit the new technology as well as to provide adult retraining programs to cope with changes in patterns of employment arising from the introduction of new technology. Nevertheless, it is necessary to caution that the high levels of specialist skill required in some areas will be provided not by the colleges of technical and further education but through graduates trained in universities and institutes of technology. There will be an ever present danger that enterprising colleges of technical and further education will seek to upgrade the academic standing of the courses they offer, and thus encroach on the domain of higher education leaving unfilled the areas associated with the provision of training in vocational skills that they were established to provide.

## Equipment for the Disabled

5.11 The Committee was greatly impressed with the work being undertaken in South Australia in the development and construction of electronic and technological aids for use with severely handicapped students in special education programs. The assistance of students from a metropolitan high school in the manufacture of the aids is also to be commended, because of the educational benefits arising from learning experience that are associated with the production of the equipment. It is understood that there is uncertainty regarding future funding of this work by the Special Education section.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.1 (a) funds should be made available to the Special Education section of the Education Department for a three-year period, with the possibility of renewal for a further period of three years, for the development of relatively inexpensive electronic and technological aids for use in special education programs, and that the use of school workshops should continue to be permitted for the purpose of manufacture of such equipment;

(b) the Special Education section should investigate equipment being developed in Australia and overseas that would facilitate the provision of educational programs for the disabled, and that consideration should continue to be given to the need for and the educational value of such equipment that might be purchased for use in South Australian schools; and

(c) where new equipment is developed its commercial potential should be fully explored for the benefit of a wider community and the income used to support further development.

## Educational Use of the National Communications Satellite

5.12 The Committee reviewed the work currently being undertaken by the Education Technology Centre of the Education Department of South Australia on the use of the national communications satellite for educational purposes, particularly for its use in distance education. This facility has very considerable potential for use in the open education programs conducted by the Department of Technical and Further Education, by remote country schools, and by the Correspondence School of the Education Department. It is evident that changes will need to take place in the way in which the Open College of the Department of Technical and Further Education and the Correspondence School (called perhaps by a more appropriate name) of the Education Department operate in the future, in order to co-ordinate their activities and make greater use of the new technology. In the long term the Committee envisages that these two bodies, the Open College and the Correspondence School could well become the nucleus of an informal educational network providing greater choice and diversity in educational provision for students of all ages.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.2 (a) the Educational Technology Centre should be funded for a three-year period for further developmental work to be undertaken into the application of new technologies including the use of the national communications satellite and other communications systems to provide an open-access system of education for students of both the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education in remote areas; and a detailed proposal should be prepared to cover the staff and contingency costs for a developmental investigation that would enable some of the costs of such work to be sought from sources outside the State;

(b) one member of staff should be seconded from each of the Correspondence School of the Education Department and of the Open College of the Department of Technical and Further Education to join the project team for the investigation proposed above;

(c) a person with expertise in evaluation should be funded to undertake an independent evaluation of the investigation; and

(d) the investigation should be reviewed by a national panel at the end of the period of three years to determine the rate at which further work on the project should be undertaken and the value of the work undertaken for education in other parts of Australia.

It should be noted that technology of this type has the potential for wider use than in the provision of distance education to remote areas. It could help greatly in the development of more flexible approaches to teaching and learning to serve an adult population of the future who seek retraining and recurrent education.

5.13 Rapid changes are taking place overseas in the field of information technology, but while new information systems are being developed in Australia, interactive computerized systems are still largely unknown. The Educational Technology Centre of the South Australian Education Department has become a licensed Prestel user with direct access to services that are available in Britain. There is not a wide range of information likely to be of use to educators in South Australia currently stored on the Prestel system; however, the principles involved in the conduct of such a system would seem to have extensive applicability for an education service with its schools widely scattered across the State. The Education Department needs to maintain working contact with its 10 Regional Offices and its 700 schools not only in the provision of information of an educational nature, but also for administrative, accounting and supply purposes. It would thus seem desirable for each school and regional office to have direct access to such an information system to enable their teachers, librarians and administrators to make full use of the educational and administrative information available.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.3 (a) the Educational Technology Centre should be funded for a three-year period to investigate, in the first instance, the feasibility of establishing a videographic storage and retrieval system to the 10 Regional Offices and the 700 schools of the South Australian Education Department; and

(b) at the end of the three-year period the investigation should be reviewed by a panel drawn from the Office of the Ministry of Education, the State Treasury and the Public Service Board to examine the value of the work undertaken for the administration of education in South Australia, as well as for other government departments within the State, including the Department of Technical and Further Education.

## Educational Technology and Libraries

5.14 The Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in 1971 recommended that the Libraries Branch and the Audio-Visual Education Centre of the Education Department should be amalgamated into a single Teaching Resources Service. The Audio-Visual Education Centre has rightly changed its name to the Educational Technology Centre, and has moved into the field of developmental work associated with information technology and information processing. It is clear that new technology will lead to an extension of work associated with information processing, and there will be a serious risk that the Libraries Branch will remain apart from this development unless it is drawn in at an early stage. During the past decade the work of school libraries has been greatly extended and there has been considerable diversification in activities of librarians from those concerned primarily with the storage and lending of books and the encouragement of reading by students. While the Committee does not envisage that the importance of the book in schools will decline, it would advocate a continued diversification of activities to include the use of other sources of information in schools and classrooms. As a consequence it would oppose the establishment of an Educational Technology Unit in schools and colleges of technical and further education to maintain equipment and materials that are non-book sources of information. Instead, the Committee would advocate that the functions of school libraries be increasingly extended to include materials and equipment associated with other information sources. This diversification of the work of libraries, leading to the development of learning resource centres, needs to be co-ordinated centrally. As a consequence the Committee would envisage that policies of close collaboration between the Libraries Branch and the Educational Technology Centre would need to be developed by the proposed Director of Regional Services which would lead to the greater co-ordination of activities at the school level. A problem that is seen, but is largely unresolved, is one of ensuring that there is not unnecessary duplication of effort in the developmental work currently being carried out by the Educational Technology Centre of the Education Department, and one which might in the future be undertaken by the Educational Resources Branch of the Department of Technical and Further Education. While the Committee strongly supports the rationalization of effort between the two Departments it would not at this time advocate an amalgamation of the Educational Technology Centre and the Educational Resources Branch.

Nevertheless, it would suggest that this is an area where the activities of the two Departments should be kept under review and the possibility of amalgamation be considered in the future. Since it is important to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, there would be much to be gained from close collaboration between the two units, and from a co-ordination of their programs of development.

## Technical and Further Education

5.15 The Committee has examined the documents submitted by the Department of Technical and Further Education and it recognizes that a need for developmental work exists within the colleges in two distinct areas. First, there is a need for the revision and extension of curricula to incorporate the developments that are occurring in commerce and industry as a result of the introduction of new technology, and secondly, there is a need for the introduction of new equipment to ensure that students gain some experience of the technological developments that are occurring. The first of these objectives will be achieved, in part, through the staff of the colleges using much of their non-teaching time, particularly during periods when students are not present in the colleges, to gain direct experience with the new technology in commerce and industry. Nevertheless, much is likely to be gained from a review of developments in other parts of Australia and possibly overseas, as well as through the undertaking of special curriculum development programs, and it would appear desirable that resources should be available to support this work in the colleges. The Committee recognizes that some funding is made available for major programs in this area, but the nature of the support which is authorized through the Technical and Further Education Council of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission is not of a kind that would foster relatively rapid and widespread change in courses throughout the State. Furthermore, it is essential that resources are available to colleges to enable them to purchase new items of equipment including micro-electronic equipment and information processing equipment to use in teaching programs conducted within the colleges. The colleges of technical and further education need to maintain equipment of two general kinds for their trade training programs, namely, equipment of the type that most of their trainees will work with in the immediate future, and more sophisticated equipment that trainees need to understand and be able to adapt to as it is acquired generally by employers. For the Department of Technical and Further Education to maintain continuously the most advanced equipment in its colleges may prove to be an impossible task without a large supply of funds for this purpose. The colleges should explore joint arrangements with industry whereby some shared use of advanced major equipment could take place with mutual benefit to the colleges and to industry.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.4 (a) $250,000 should be made available in each of three years to support curriculum development programs directed towards incorporating modern technology into the courses conducted within the colleges;

(b) $250,000 should be made available in each of three years to support the purchase of micro-electronic and information processing equipment for use in colleges in instructional programs;

(c) colleges of technical and further education should be invited to make application for funding to undertake programs of curriculum development and the purchase of new equipment, and that procedures be developed for the disbursement of the moneys available, in a manner that would be consistent with proposals for program administration within the Department of Technical and Further Education; and

(d) after a period of three years an evaluation of this supplementary funding should be undertaken by a small panel of independent assessors to determine whether or not this program should be continued in the recommended form, and if modifications to the program appear necessary and desirable to recommend such modifications prior to the program continuing for a further period of three years.

5.16 The Committee is impressed with the possibilities exhibited through the use of instructional programs, which are recorded on video-disc that can be operated in conjunction with a computer through dial-up direct line access, to provide bridging courses in subjects such as mathematics and physics for students planning to embark on courses of study at a college of technical and further education. Such use of computer assisted instruction (CAI) is an admirable situation in which to test in South Australia the potential offered by CAI. However, the Committee sees no need to make further recommendation for the introduction of such a trial of CAI or computer assisted learning because this type of innovatory and developmental work is covered by the proposals advanced above. The potential for computer assisted instruction and learning is too strong to be ignored. It should have considerable appeal to many students in post-secondary educational programs, because of the control that they have over their own learning, and as a consequence the Committee believes that such approaches to learning should now be tried in South Australian colleges.

5.17 The Committee believes that if such moneys were wisely administered in ways that emphasized new technological developments and that were directed towards the development of new curricula and the acquisition of new equipment, the effects on the courses of colleges throughout the State could be substantial. In addition, past experience has shown that the availability of such equipment in colleges can have a highly beneficial effect for small businesses within the State that wished to learn about new technological developments in a practical way and were considering the possibility of introducing new technology into their own operations.

5.18 The Committee notes that the different committees of enquiry into teacher education have not given consideration to the desirability of changes to both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs for persons who plan to work in colleges of technical and further education in order to acquaint them with the significance of the new technology for their future work. It is essential that the use of micro-electronic technology for computer assisted instruction and the use of information processing technology for resource based learning should be introduced to college lecturers undertaking courses in colleges of advanced education and in-service education programs.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.5 (a) colleges of advanced education in their courses of teacher education and in their post-graduate diplomas in educational technology should give consideration to the inclusion of segments associated with the introduction of new technology, to meet the needs of lecturers in colleges of technical and further education; and

(b) colleges of technical and further education, that introduce new technological equipment and curricula, should recognize their obligation to disseminate information on technological developments both to their colleagues in other colleges, and to commerce and industry through the conducting of short awareness courses, for which all attending would pay fees to support the running of the courses.

## A Challenge for Girls and Women

5.19 New positions and career opportunities are being opened up for which there are insufficient persons currently available in the State of South Australia and across Australia who have the expertise required for working in these fields which are associated with the new technologies. Furthermore, in these fields, there are not established patterns of career expectation involving discrimination between the sexes. There is no reason why girls and women should not work as effectively in the areas of computing and information processing as do men. Consequently, if girls and women wish to seek out areas of employment, that are likely to be well rewarded in the future, and embark on careers in those areas, then they should give every consideration to entry into the fields associated with the new technologies, and, in particular, into those areas involving computing and information processing.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R5.6 the attention of all who are responsible for advising students at the upper secondary and tertiary levels should be drawn to the career opportunities that are likely to exist for girls as well as boys in the future in fields associated with the introduction of new technology, such as those involving micro-electronic and information processing technology.

# CHAPTER 6

# CHILDREN AND THEIR SCHOOLS

## Advice from the Bean Committee

6.1 The Committee in its first report endorsed recognition of the fact that each individual child is different and that in the planning of educational services each individual is important. This recognition must rightly influence the way in which schools are organized and the nature of the educational services provided in order to provide continuity of learning for every student throughout the years of schooling. Consequently, the Committee, in general, commends the view of the curriculum taken by the Education Department that it involves a planned sequence of learning by students across the years of schooling from the Reception Grade to Year 12. Nevertheless, the Committee recognizes that certain problems are not eliminated by such an approach. There is always the possibility that the progress of individual children will be accelerated or retarded through the years of schooling to the extent that some children will encounter learning problems that might otherwise be avoided. Furthermore, there is the related problem that without very clear guidelines teachers will attempt to teach ideas and skills to children ahead of their stage of cognitive and emotional development. The Committee has in its review of the evidence presented to it noted, both within the schools and among those who are responsible for the preparation of teachers and the supervision of teachers, instances where insufficient attention would appear to have been given to avoiding the pitfalls referred to above.

6.2 The Committee has examined with considerable interest the First and Final Reports of the Education Inquiry Committee that surveyed education in South Australia, over thirty years ago. It endorses the views on curriculum matters expressed by that Committee in such phrases as "the change most needed is greater adaptation of the school to the interest and capacity of the child", "traditional methods of mass instruction ignore the very great differences between the children", and "the work and activities of the school should be designed to develop the physical, emotional and social well-being of the child, as well as the intellectual"[1]. Furthermore, we agree with the statement "In our opinion the greatest defect in educational methods has been that all of us, parents as well as teachers, have pre-occupied ourselves too much with the products of schooling, and far too little with the process"[2]. As a consequence the Bean Committee complained that children "are put to work as

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1. Education Inquiry Committee, (Chairman: E.L. Bean). 1945. op. cit., p.33.
2. ibid p.4

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early as possible, if not from the outset, at the three R's by the traditional methods used in class instruction"[3].

6.3 In order to prevent this gradual advancement and encroachment of a premature emphasis on certain learning products at the expense of the processes of learning, the Committee believes that it is essential for schooling to be viewed in terms of a series of stages rather than as being completely continuous. We do not see these stages as being rigidly related to age or to grades of schooling. Nevertheless, we do believe that such general stages exist and are related to the stages of both concept development and physical and emotional development that are now well documented from research[4]. Furthermore, they correspond, in broad terms, with the traditional phases of schooling that experience has led us to believe are useful in structuring a school system. The first of these stages is concerned with early childhood, from birth to approximately age 5 to 6 years. Generally, this coincides with the period in a child's life prior to the commencement of formal schooling. The second stage covers, in the main, from age 5 years to age 8 years, and is recognized in the years of schooling by the junior primary or infant grades. The third stage is approximately from age 8 years to age 12 years and involves the years of primary schooling. The fourth stage is, in general terms, from age 12 years to age 15 or 16 years, which is associated with the years of secondary schooling prior to the end of the period of compulsory schooling. The fifth stage covers the period from 15 years to 18 years during which the student is completing secondary schooling. The sixth stage is from 18 years onwards during a period of tertiary education, and the final stage covers the adult years during which further and continuing education programs may be taken. These stages and the corresponding age levels are stated in very general terms. Nevertheless, there are associated stages of intellectual development that must be taken into consideration in planning the learning experiences to be provided for individual children, and failure to recognize these stages can lead to inappropriate educational programs being provided for children. Consequently, in the discussion of curriculum issues the Committee has found it necessary to think in terms of these stages of development and stages of schooling and to argue that appropriate educational provision should be made at each stage. The progress of individual children through the successive stages is clearly a matter for the professional judgement of teachers and for discussion in consultation with parents. However, teachers of children during the years of childhood and early childhood are unable to exercise that professional judgement unless they have a firm grounding and knowledge of child development, and unless they themselves have acquired the skills of assessing the level of progress of individual children through these stages of development as well as assessing the extent of the learning achieved by each child within the classroom. There are some children who are able to progress rapidly through these stages of schooling, and there are some with learning handicaps who will respond to more intensive teaching or an extension of time at a particular stage. It is thus the responsibility of every teacher, as far as is possible, to ensure that each child moves through the years of schooling at an appropriate pace, that gifted children are not held back, and that the less able receive the help that they need.

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[3] ibid. p.16

[4] Hunt, J.McV. Intelligence and Experience. New York: Ronald Press, 1961.

## The Threshold of Learning

6.4 In this section the Committee wishes to emphasize that it is an essential task of the primary schools to ensure that every pupil acquires the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Only those few students who have extreme physical and mental handicaps are likely to be prevented from mastering these skills. As a consequence it is important that every effort should be made to guarantee that students before they leave primary schooling have crossed this threshold of learning that will enable them to profit from further education and that will enable them to live effectively in modern society. The recent publication Into the 80s recognizes this emphasis in the following words:

> In any change of direction, or in any re-allocation of priorities, schools must continue to give special emphasis to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. These are of fundamental importance at all levels of schooling.[5]

Nevertheless, it must be recognized that some students are currently leaving primary schooling without having achieved mastery of these skills and are thus unable to cope effectively with the learning provided at the secondary school level. There is no one strategy of instruction that can be used to guarantee the successful crossing of this threshold by every child. For some, remedial help given by the classroom teacher is an answer, and for others, a solution is provided through the availability of a person trained in remedial teaching who is working in the school and who can give individual tuition. For others again, it is sufficient to provide additional practice in reading through peer or cross-age tutoring, through the use of voluntary help from parents or through a school assistant or teacher aide. Sometimes it is helpful for parents to be involved in the supervision of additional reading and learning at home, but such procedures require skill and tact on the part of parents. All strategies must be available and some additional resources may be required to ensure that wherever possible children achieve a satisfactory level of competence in the basic skills. Nevertheless, sometimes the failure of individual children to achieve mastery is a consequence of either the inability of a teacher to diagnose the deficiency, or failure on the part of a teacher to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to provide help for children in need. In such cases there is clearly a lack of recognition of the importance of such work, and a failure on the part of the Principal of the school to establish the necessary procedures for the detection of the learning difficulties of individual children, as well as the provision of appropriate opportunities for remedial instruction. In some primary schools the extent of this problem of ensuring that every child crosses the threshold of learning through the acquisition of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is far greater than in others. Consequently, there is a need to provide those schools, where there are significant numbers of students requiring remedial teaching, with additional resources to ensure that children with such learning problems receive the necessary help that would not be available unless the additional resources were supplied.

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[5] South Australia, Education Department. Into the 80s, 1981, op. cit., p.26.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.1 (a) in every primary school on-going programs should be established to identify children who have not achieved or are not achieving mastery of the basic skills, and to provide the necessary instruction to assist these children to cross the threshold of basic learning; and

(b) the Education Department should develop procedures for providing adequate teaching staff to those schools that have significant numbers of students with learning problems to ensure that appropriate remedial education programs are established to diagnose learning problems and to help students to overcome them.

In Chapter 5 of this report consideration was given to the provision and use of learning aids to assist children with serious mental and physical handicaps to overcome their learning difficulties.

## The Foundations of Learning

6.5 The Committee believes that there are certain areas of the curriculum that form the foundations of further learning. Moreover, these areas at the primary school level are common for all children who have crossed the threshold of learning, referred to in the previous section and are thus common to all schools not only within the State but probably across Australia. All too frequently it is necessary for students and teachers to change from one school to another. Under such circumstances there is a serious discontinuity in the students' learning as the students adjust to a changed situation in their schooling or as they adjust to a new teacher in their classroom. The curriculum areas that the Committee sees to be of a fundamental kind are:

- the acquisition of skills associated with the use of the English language both oral and written (language);
- knowledge and understanding of the physical world and the natural environment (science);
- knowledge, understanding and ability to apply certain concepts and relations of number and space (mathematics); and
- knowledge and understanding of the society in which we live and our relationship to it as individuals (social learning).

It would seem desirable, in order to minimize disruption associated with the transfer of students and teachers, for the Education Department to provide recommended courses of instruction for use across all ages and grades of junior primary and primary schooling. However, it is not merely because of the problems of transfer that we advocate the development and implementation of recommended courses of instruction. We recognize the complexity of developing appropriate courses at each grade level and believe that it is too difficult a task for each and every school to undertake on its own, and still to maintain courses of high quality. In addition, the Committee, from its visits to schools is, aware of repeated requests by primary school principals and teachers for assistance of this kind, together with their expressed sense of frustration with the delays associated with obtaining some new courses that they know are being developed within the Curriculum Directorate. While the Committee is reluctant to prescribe clear guidelines on the proportion of time during the school day to be spent on these four areas of the curriculum, it would envisage that approximately two-thirds of the time available would be given to learning in these four areas, with greater emphasis being given to language and mathematics than to science and social learning.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.2 recommended courses of instruction should be developed in the four areas of fundamental learning - language, science, mathematics and social learning - for use in the junior primary and primary grades and that these courses be made available as soon as is practicable to all schools.

The availability of recommended courses in these four areas should, the Committee believes, be accompanied by their adoption and use by schools unless the schools were able to develop courses of their own that could be recognized as being either superior or more appropriate for the students within the school. This approach would require the development of procedures for granting recognition and approval for such courses. The procedures by which approval might be given have been considered in Chapters 4 and 12 of this report.

## Areas of Experiential Learning

6.6 The remaining four areas of the curriculum are:

- health and physical education;
- moral reasoning and action, value and belief systems;
- the arts and crafts;
- work, leisure and life skills.

These four are important areas for student learning, which the Committee believes should be given due emphasis in the junior primary and primary school curriculum. The curricula developed in these areas should be based on the students' experiences, and hence the term "experiential learning" would seem to be appropriate. Again, the Committee believes that schools and their teachers are requesting leadership in the tasks of curriculum choice and curriculum development in these four areas. Consequently the Committee believes that recommended courses of instruction should be developed in these four areas, and should include statements of general aims, curriculum objectives and specified organization and content. It would seem, in general, unnecessary to develop detailed student learning materials and teachers guides for instructional programs in these four areas of the curriculum. Recommended curriculum statements would be made available to schools, but schools would have freedom to use these recommended statements, in whole or in part, in developing and implementing appropriate programs in these four areas.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.3 recommended courses of instruction should be developed comprising statements of general aims, curriculum objectives and specified organization and content in the four curriculum areas of health and physical education, moral reasoning and action, arts and crafts, and work, leisure and life skills; and if a school chose not to use a recommended course or to use such a course only in part, it would need to obtain approval for the course used within the school.

## The Primary School Curriculum

6.7 It is important to recognize that a primary school teacher, in the main, takes a class group for all or nearly all of its classroom learning activities, and will teach in a way that will treat the primary school curriculum, which we have divided into eight parts, not so much as eight discrete sections but more as an integrated whole. Clearly the potential weakness associated with identifying eight distinct areas for the primary school curriculum must be avoided, lest the teaching and learning should become fragmented and lack cohesion. It will also be necessary for a statement to be prepared by the Primary School Curriculum Committee on the recommended time allocation for the eight areas of the curriculum together with recommended ways in which the eight curriculum areas should be linked together in teaching, so that a well co-ordinated or integrated curriculum is achieved.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.4 the Primary School Curriculum Committee should prepare curriculum guidelines on the recommended time allocation across the eight areas of the curriculum, on recommended minimum time levels for areas associated with the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and on principles and procedures for the integration of the parts of the curriculum into a whole.

## The Junior Primary School Curriculum

6.8 The proposals that we have made in the previous section for the development of the primary school curriculum apply with equal force to the curriculum of the junior primary grades. In addition, it must be recognized that substantially different teaching methods must be used in the instruction of children in junior primary classrooms from those used with older primary school children. The teaching methods used in junior primary grades will be less formal, more activity oriented and with a higher degree of individualization of instruction. Teachers at the junior primary grade level have been fearful that, as a consequence of rationalization both in the administration of the Education Department and in the provision of unified teacher education programs in teachers colleges, there will be a significant change in the teaching methods employed in junior primary classrooms. It is contended by junior primary teachers that such changes elsewhere have followed the removal of the distinction between the infant and primary sections within primary schools. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that the use of less formal teaching methods in junior primary classrooms was gradually achieved following the publication of the reports of the Education Inquiry Committee in the late 1940s and the programs of teacher education that prepared the way for the implementation of the proposed changes. It would seem that the recommendations of the Karmel Committee concerning the integration of the infant schools within the primary schools[6], while seeking greater flexibility and greater co-ordination across the primary school have made junior primary teachers very fearful lest the educational benefits of their activity approach and teaching methods should be lost. It would appear unsatisfactory to argue that through such integration the less formal teaching methods of the junior primary grades would spread to primary schools, since if this were a deficiency in primary school teaching it should be tackled directly and not indirectly.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.5 (a) where appropriate in the administration of primary schools the distinctions between junior primary and primary sections should be maintained, since it is important that the less formal activity procedures that are currently used in junior primary classrooms should not gradually disappear;

(b) the preparation of teachers, while permitting student teachers to develop competence over the whole of the primary field, should continue to make allowance for specialization at the junior primary or primary school levels; and

(c) a Junior Primary Curriculum Committee should be established to ensure that full consideration is given to the curricular needs and teaching methods that are appropriate across school Years R to 2.

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[6] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971, op. cit., pp.174-7.

## Early Childhood Education

6.9 The Committee in its first report viewed the early childhood area of education as providing a range of programs and services, including the conventional sessional pre-school for children from three to five years of age in pre-schools conducted by the Kindergarten Union, the Education Department, the Catholic Education Office and other non-government schools, as well as, it has learnt, in a small number of pre-schools conducted privately. In addition, there is a range of child care programs conducted by the Department of Community Welfare, the Kindergarten Union, community groups, with support from the Department of Local Government, together with Family Day Care services and commercial child care centres licensed by the Department of Community Welfare[7]. Other services provided at the early childhood stage are toy libraries, after school care, mobile kindergartens and a very substantial number of play groups. This wide range of programs and services conducted by a number of different bodies requires highly competent staff at several different levels of training, since there are supervisory and advisory positions, persons responsible for the conduct of centres of different types, assistants, and aides. In many ways the distinctions that formerly existed between the pre-schools and the child care centres, and between the work being carried out in these two areas will be broken down as integrated centres are developed. However, there is growing recognition that the work of a pre-school teacher is different in kind from that of a primary school teacher, since a substantial component of health and welfare as well as educational work is involved in the pre-school program. Likewise, there is increasing recognition that child care workers as well as carrying out health and welfare tasks are also engaged in educational activities. Furthermore, the curriculum of the pre-school centres is being increasingly directed towards involvement of the family in promoting physical, social, emotional as well as cognitive and linguistic development, in addition to providing a regular program of activities within the centre that would foster growth in each of these fields.

6.10 It must also be recognized that early childhood educational programs are providing a service in a changing social setting, in which there are smaller family units and less opportunities for play within the home and the immediate neighbourhood of the home. Furthermore, there is increasingly only one parent in the home responsible for the upbringing of the child, as well as increasingly greater strains and tensions within the family that can have a disturbing effect on the young child. In addition, since more mothers with children are undertaking part-time and full-time work, which in itself may add to the strains on the family, the early childhood services which are available are playing a more important part in the life of both the children and their parents. Preparation of staff for work in the early childhood area would seem to involve an entirely different type of training to that provided for traditional teachers. The work is more demanding, more complex and requires a greater knowledge and understanding of child development, but is nevertheless highly educational in nature. It was for these reasons that the Committee argued in its first report that the programs for the preparation of staff who might work in the early childhood field should have:

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[7] The Committee regrets that it under emphasized the contribution of the Kindergarten Union in the child care field, as a result of the content of the initial submission it received from the Union. Furthermore the Committee in its first report implied that the Department of Local Government had responsibility for child care centres conducted by community groups. It does not.

> little relationship to those associated with preparation for primary and secondary school teaching, but should have sufficiently broad coverage to enable a graduate of an early childhood education course to work in any section of the general early childhood field[8].

The Committee does not withdraw from the position that it adopted in its first report with a clear stress on a stage of education involving children from birth to 6 years, and with an emphasis on the need for very close working relationships with parents. In particular, it is the need for preparation to undertake this work with parents that is central to the training required for early childhood personnel and that makes the early childhood training program significantly different from that for a junior primary or primary school teacher. There is also the need to develop skills and understandings in the health and welfare areas that make the training of early childhood personnel very different from that of teachers.

6.11 The Committee has been surprised that the junior primary teachers, teacher educators, and administrators have so strongly disagreed with the views expressed and the position taken by the Committee in its first report on matters raised in paragraph 6.10 above. They have argued that their field of junior primary education is primarily concerned with children aged from birth to eight years. Furthermore, they contend that anyone who is trained to work with children in primary schools can work with children of younger age from birth to five years. However, when asked to consider the curriculum for the early childhood stage of education, these educators move very quickly to a consideration of reading and pre-reading skills and the development of concepts of number and space. They have contended that early childhood educators should abandon their traditional maturation view of child development and should devise programs for pre-schools that recognize the importance of language and cognitive development. However, for children, the pre-school years, especially the first three years of life appear to be highly important for the later development of competencies[9]. While research in this area is incomplete, the general results are well recognized and must be taken into full consideration. The evidence available also indicates that both language development and cognitive development can be accelerated by the informal learning situations that occur in the home, but are a great deal more difficult to plan for and develop in the pre-school classroom setting. It is with this in mind that the promotion of linguistic and cognitive development during the years of early childhood is conceived of by the Committee as taking place largely in the home. As a consequence the thrust of the programs should be to encourage parents to undertake this work. However, the call to parents to share in the education of the child comes at a time when some parents of necessity or inclination are tending to abrogate responsibility for the education of young children to an institution. That new approaches to early childhood education are required is not in doubt. What the Committee wishes to challenge is that such approaches bear a close relationship to preparation for primary and secondary teaching, as well as the view that was advanced to the Committee that any person trained for teaching in primary schools can work effectively with young children in early childhood education programs. However, the Committee could envisage situations in which training for the early childhood stage of education took place in the same institutions as training for other stages of education, and that certain courses of teacher education could be shared. Nevertheless, the Committee would contend that it is necessary for specialization to occur at some stage during the program of teacher pre-service education, and thus to permit some students to specialize in the early childhood field and some to specialize in teaching in the junior primary grades.

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[8] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.7-12

6.12 It is clearly necessary for greater attention to be given to specifying the curriculum for institutions providing services for the early childhood stage of education. The term "curriculum" may not be well understood in this context, but it relates to the set of learning experiences that are provided to foster the growth and development of the child. Necessarily, the learning experiences for this stage will relate to the physical, emotional, social, and language development of the child and not just to those aspects that are of an intellectual or cognitive nature. The task of spelling out the appropriate program or curriculum is likely to be a difficult and challenging one and should be undertaken as a joint enterprise by persons engaged in the provision of early educational services and not solely by a Curriculum Committee within the Education Department.

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[9] Hunt, J. McV. Psychological Development: Early Experience. Annual Review of Psychology, 1979, 30: 103-144.

## The Age-Grade Structure of Primary Schools

6.13 The Committee's attention has been drawn to the immaturity of students going straight from school to universities and other tertiary institutions in South Australia. This immaturity, it is claimed, is reflected in the low level of achievement of students in certain subjects such as Chemistry and Physics. It has been contended that a solution to this problem would be to add another year of schooling at the terminal stage, to bring South Australia more into line with some of the eastern States, namely New South Wales and Victoria. The Committee in examining this issue considered the change in average age by year across the primary school years. Data on the average age by year of schooling in the government schools in Australia have been presented in Table 6.1 for years 1964 and 1979. Leaving aside the question of the number of years of primary schooling, several points of interest emerge from this table. On average, students enter the Kindergarten Year or Reception Grade as it is now called in South Australia at the same age as they did formerly in 1964, and at approximately the same age as they do in the eastern States. Secondly, where formerly in 1964 the average age of students in Year 7 was 12 years 7 months, in 1979 their average age had fallen by six months to 12 years 1 month. Thirdly, it should be noted that the average ages of students in South Australia in both Years 6 and 7 are the lowest in the seven school systems under review. As a consequence students in South Australia complete their twelfth year of school about eight months younger than in New South Wales and Victoria and marginally younger than students in Queensland and Western Australia. Fourthly, the change that has taken place in the age-grade structure of South Australian primary schools would appear to be a consequence of changes in policies of grade repetition in the lower and middle primary school grades and not a result of changes in policies associated with transition from the Reception Grade to Year 1. However, it is possible that the phased introduction of policies for entry to school, and the arrival of migrant students from overseas could also have made a contribution. Fifthly, while there were in other States signs of grade repetition practices as indicated by regular

Table 6.1 Average Age by Year of School in the Government Schools in Australia, 1964 and 1979 (in years and months)[a]

| State or Territory | Year | Primary |  |  |  |  |  |  | Secondary |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | K | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Aust. Cap. Territory | 1979 | 5.8 | 6.8 | 7.9 | 8.9 | 9.8 | 10.9 | 11.9 | 12.9 |
| New South Wales | 1964 | 5.7 | 6.8 | 7.10 | 8.11 | 10.0 | 11.1 | 12.1 | 13.2 |
|  | 1979 | 5.7 | 6.8 | 7.8 | 8.9 | 9.9 | 10.10 | 11.10 | 12.10 |
| Victoria | 1964 |  | 6.1 | 7.7 | 8.8 | 9.8 | 10.8 | 11.8 | 12.9 |
|  | 1979 | 5.8 | 6.8 | 7.8 | 8.8 | 9.8 | 10.8 | 11.8 | 12.8 |
| Queensland | 1964 |  | 6.1 | 7.2 | 8.4 | 9.5 | 10.5 | 11.5 | 12.5 |
|  | 1979 |  | 6.1 | 7.1 | 8.2 | 9.2 | 10.2 | 11.3 | 12.3 |
| South Australia | 1964 | 5.6 | 6.1 | 7.2 | 8.3 | 9.5 | 10.6 | 11.6 | 12.7 |
|  | 1979 | 5.6 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 8.0 | 9.0 | 10.0 | 11.1 | 12.1 |
| Western Australia | 1964 |  | 6.3 | 7.3 | 8.3 | 9.3 | 10.3 | 11.3 | 12.3 |
|  | 1979 |  | 6.2 | 7.2 | 8.2 | 9.2 | 10.2 | 11.2 | 12.2 |
| Tasmania | 1964 | 5.6 | 6.5 | 7.8 | 8.9 | 9.9 | 10.9 | 11.10 | 13.0 |
|  | 1979 | 5.8 | 6.8 | 7.9 | 8.9 | 9.9 | 10.9 | 11.9 | 12.9 |

Note: [a] Australian data apply to 1 August
Sources: ABS. Schools Australia. Cat.No.4202.0.

increases in the value of the month of the year with increasing grade level, these have been reduced over the fifteen-year period, but in no other system has the change been as marked as in South Australia. Sixthly, it should be noted that in the other two States, Queensland and Western Australia, with a similar structure of seven years in primary school there is no Kindergarten or Reception Grade. In these two States students complete schooling at Year 12 level rather younger than students in other parts of Australia, but they are not as young on average as are students in South Australia. Before giving consideration to the issue of whether or not to propose the introduction of an additional year of schooling in South Australia, it is necessary to examine the extent of provision in early childhood education programs in different parts of Australia, and the existing policies for entry into school.

6.14 In Table 6.2 information has been recorded on participation rates in school and early childhood education programs in Australia for those systems for which data were available from the government and private agencies responsible for the conduct of early childhood education programs. While there is a difference of one month in the dates at which data were collected for South Australia compared with the other Australian systems and while these differences in date of collection will produce some bias, we do not believe

Table 6.2 Participation Rates in Early Childhood Education Programs at Schools in Several Australian States for Ages 3 to 5 years in 1979

| Per cent recorded | | Age Group in Years | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| System | Date | 3.0 to 3.11 | 4.0 to 4.11 | 5.0 to 5.11 |
| Queensland | Aug. 1979 | 0.5 | 35 | 85 |
| South Australia | Jul. 1979 | 33 | 90 | 98 |
| Western Australia | Aug. 1979 | 11 | 55 | 93 |
| Tasmania | Aug. 1979 | 3 | 46 | 96 |

Source: Various State and Commonwealth Government Publications

they would have substantial effects on the percentages recorded. It is evident that Queensland and Western Australia have developed very substantial pre-school systems to make provision for students who in the other States, where such grades exist, may well have been at school in the Kindergarten or Reception Grade. However, in South Australia, in comparison with other state systems, there is a very high level of participation in early childhood education programs, with near universal participation of five year-old children, 90 per cent participation of four year-old children and approximately one third of children aged three years who are benefiting from early childhood education programs. It should be noted that in the early childhood programs not all children attend all sessions, some children attending for only four half-day sessions per week. However, the great majority of five year-old children are attending school full-time in South Australia (in excess of 90 per cent).

6.15 The current policies in South Australian government schools are that no child can be enrolled in other than a child/parent centre before the age of five years. Admission of children aged five years is a matter of parental choice and as a minimum, schools will enrol an intake of new children at the beginning of each term. Where possible, students are enrolled more frequently than this, and a substantial number of schools enrol new students on a continuous basis. The Education Department has, during 1981, conducted a survey of changes in school policies in this area over the past decade. Approximately 25 per cent of the schools sampled have not changed their policies. Of the 75 per cent that have changed, the evidence would appear to suggest that junior primary schools were more likely to change and rural schools less likely to do so. However, there is no consistent pattern of change since schools have changed in their policies in almost every possible direction. Perhaps the only generalization possible is that there is a trend towards more frequent times for admission to school. Perhaps these changes are a consequence of declining enrolments and vacant places in the Reception Grades in many schools. It would clearly be difficult to introduce a uniform policy, because from the reports of interviews with the teaching staff of South Australian primary and junior primary schools it is apparent that there is conviction amongst the teachers that they are pursuing policies that are appropriate for the situation in which their school is placed.

6.16 Of greater significance must be the progress of children through the junior primary grades. The current policy on progress is as follows:

> Children admitted at age five will be regarded initially as reception enrolments, except that such children admitted at the beginning of the year may be regarded as Year 1 enrolments.
>
> Only in exceptional circumstances should children admitted at age five spend less than two years in reception to Year 2. No child, at whatever age admitted, shall spend more than three years in reception to Year 2 without referral to a guidance officer.
>
> The policies further state that:
>
> Entry into Year 3 should occur only at the beginning of the school year.

Because of the interest shown by the Committee in this issue the sample of schools was again approached by staff of the Education Department to provide information on the period of time children spent in the junior primary grades. The unpublished data collected by the staff of the Education Department into this question are recorded in Table 6.3. From the evidence presented in Table 6.3, it is evident that, while very few children spend less than two years in the junior primary grades, up to 40 per cent spend the minimum of two years at school before entering Year 3 classes and a further 14 per cent spend between two years and two years and one term. Thus on the one hand, for 40 per cent of the students entering the South Australian school system the Reception Grade serves no useful purpose, and for a further 14 per cent it does little more than familiarize children with school for up to one term. On the other hand, it should be noted that nearly all children now coming into South Australian schools have profited from at least a year at pre-school, many attending the child/parent centres conducted by the Education Department. Thus familiarization with schooling is of less consequence than formerly when widespread opportunities to attend pre-school did not exist.

6.17 Evidence submitted to the Committee suggested that children who attended only two years or less before entering Year 3 were more likely to experience learning difficulties. It was clear that these children were denied the opportunity to experience the less formal learning that can occur in the Reception Grade. As a consequence it was more probable that they

Table 6.3 Length of Time Spent in Junior Primary School Grades in South Australian Government Schools, 1981

| Number of children recorded | Type of School | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Length of Time | Junior Primary | Primary | Area | Rural | Unnamed | Total | % |
| Less than two years | 10 | 35 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 52 | 2 |
| Two years | 182 | 854 | 100 | 26 | 38 | 1,200 | 39 |
| Up to two years 1 term | 111 | 282 | 17 | 8 | - | 418 | 14 |
| Up to two years 2 terms | 160 | 488 | 31 | 3 | 29 | 711 | 23 |
| Up to three years | 44 | 338 | 11 | 5 | 11 | 409 | 13 |
| More than three years | 19 | 58 | 3 | 11 | - | 91 | 3 |
| Unknown | 68 | 108 | 1 | - | 1 | 178 | 6 |
| Total | 594 | 2,163 | 164 | 54 | 84 | 3,059 | 100 |

Source: Data provided by Education Department of South Australia.

would require remedial help either in Year 2 or Year 3 classes. For most children who commence schooling at the beginning of the school year, there is considerable pressure on the school to permit them to complete the junior primary stage in two years. There is said to be a stigma attached to staying another year in the junior primary section of the school and a connotation of failure if children are required to take three years before entering Year 3 classes. Likewise some of the children who have spent only one term in the Reception Grade are likely to be at risk. Where once it was common for students to continue up into the primary school after only a limited period in the junior primary grades, it was also more probable that such students would repeat a grade during their years in primary school.

6.18 The Committee has considered the many issues involved and rejects the approach that an additional year should be added at the terminal secondary school stage. It is also more desirable to maintain the flexibility of the present system that permits a very able student to move freely through the junior primary grades. Moreover, the policies of continuous entry, or entry once a month into the junior primary school are consistent with flexible provision during the early years of schooling. In school systems where policies of continuous entry are widely adopted, a school structure of vertical grouping, in which children in the Reception Grade, Year 1 and Year 2 are in the same classes, is relatively common. Vertically structured teaching groups in the junior primary classrooms clearly facilitate more adequate handling of individual differences in these classrooms, thereby allowing children to work at their own pace and at an appropriate level during their early years of schooling. Nevertheless, it is clear that either unsatisfactory use is being made of the vertically structured teaching groups, or little effective use is being made of the Reception Grade, if students are being advanced into the primary grades without a thorough preparation for the work to be learnt at that stage. The need for grade repetition in the past suggests that students over a long period have been advanced prematurely into the primary grades. The decline in the practice of grade repetition must surely mean that students are advancing through primary schooling and moving on into secondary schooling more rapidly than formerly, but many are now in need of remedial instruction. However, it is not these students that the universities are complaining about, since such institutions are more likely to be concerned with students who have always done well during their years of primary schooling. There is some evidence to suggest that standards at all levels of schooling are below what they might be because of the policies that have gradually evolved in South Australia of early entry into junior primary classes, accelerated promotion through the Reception Grade, and the elimination or decline of the practice of requiring students to repeat a grade if they are not coping adequately with the work presented.

6.19 A solution to this problem does not lie in the removal of flexibility through the re-introduction of a lock-step system of rigid grade based curricula. Rather it lies in giving greater recognition to the work of the Reception Grade, by making it the exception to pass through the junior primary school grades in less than three years, permitting, where necessary, continuation in junior primary school classrooms for periods in excess of three years, and by requiring the junior primary teachers to provide evidence of a higher level of performance on the junior primary school curriculum. It is to be expected that such requirements would reduce the need for remedial programs at the primary stage and probably at the secondary school level, and would also serve to raise gradually the standard of learning throughout the school system. Without an attempt to raise the standards at each successive grade the government school system is very vulnerable. It operates in competition with non-government schools that could provide opportunities for early entry to school, and accelerated progress through the junior primary and primary school stages, if these were the wishes of parents. Any change of policies of this type will be difficult to implement, because it probably can not be accomplished by regulation but only initially by change in curricular practices in the Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 classrooms. Subsequently there would need to be changes in curricular practices at the primary stage. Such changes will clearly take a long time to implement because they are going to have to work up through the 13 years of schooling. In the short term, it may be necessary and desirable for some policies of grade repeating to be introduced at the junior primary and primary stages.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.6 (a) the curricula of the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Grades should be re-examined and if necessary redeveloped;

(b) the spending of three years at the junior primary stage of schooling should become the normal practice, for children in government schools;

(c) in exceptional circumstances a child could spend less than three years at the junior primary stage of schooling, and that in excess of three years should be permitted for some children;

(d) the curriculum of successive stages of schooling should be restructured to permit a gradual raising of standards for all students; and

(e) during the period required to implement at successive stages the proposed policies, students not coping adequately with schooling at all year levels should be encouraged to repeat a grade.

## The New Technology and the Primary School Curriculum

6.20 There is little doubt that the new approaches to information processing will change the manner in which students learn and adults work in the future. Consequently it would be of value if primary schooling were to lay the foundations through the development of certain basic skills that will be required more widely than in the past. Clearly the development of reference skills is going to be required by means of which students are trained to sort and sift, and survey and assess considerable bodies of information to obtain what they need. So, too, it will be necessary to develop greater dexterity in keyboard use because it is likely that writing in longhand will be a less useful skill than typing at a keyboard. Furthermore, the electronic calculator is already in widespread use, but without the accompanying training in classrooms to develop facility in estimating and checking the results obtained, and without training in procedures that eliminate careless mistakes and errors of operation. Clearly it is important for instruction to occur in the primary school in the use of a calculator with emphasis given to the development of procedures for approximation and verification of computations undertaken on the calculator. Perhaps the most important skill that should be developed during the primary school years is associated with ways of thinking that will facilitate the use of the computer for solving problems through a variety of approaches, including the analysis of information, simulation, and listing alternative strategies, as well as through computation.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R6.7 (a) greater emphasis should be given in primary schools to the development and use of reference skills that would in future permit more effective use to be made of information made available through the introduction of new technology;

(b) training should be given in primary schools to develop skills in the use of the keyboard;

(c) the teaching of calculation using electronic calculators should be included in the mathematics curriculum at the primary school level, with emphasis given to the development of procedures for approximation and verification of computations undertaken on a calculator; and

(d) in the mathematics curriculum an emphasis should be placed on procedures associated with the solving of simple problems including those that would permit the solution of such problems to be carried out on a small computer.

# CHAPTER 7

# THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## Some Critical Issues

7.1 Approximately 91 per cent of students in South Australian schools remain at school throughout the three years of secondary schooling, Years 8, 9 and 10. A high proportion, approximately 75 per cent, continue on for an eleventh year. Consequently, the courses offered by secondary schools in this State must be comprehensive in nature, providing a wide range of programs to cater for the interests, abilities and aptitudes of students from across the full range of the student population. The policy statement of the Education Department, *Into the 80s*, has advocated that all eight curriculum areas should be included in the courses provided for all students during the secondary school years. This Committee has argued that, at the primary school stage, there are four curriculum areas which provide the foundations for further learning. These four foundation areas of the curriculum are:

- the acquisition of skills associated with the use of language both orally and in writing (language);
- knowledge and understanding of the physical world and the natural environment (science);
- knowledge, understanding and ability to apply relations of number and space and the inter-relations between them (mathematics); and
- knowledge and understanding of the society in which we live and our relationship to it as individuals (social learning).

Likewise at the secondary school stage these four foundation areas must continue to have a central place in the curriculum. Associated with each of these curriculum areas are certain issues that must be raised in relation to the changing context in which Australian society is set as a result of economic, demographic, technological and social influences. However, while there are knowledge, understanding, and cognitive skills associated with each of these areas that are pre-requisites for further learning at school and in post-secondary education, each area is so broad that it is not possible to identify a common curriculum that all should study. Nevertheless, there is a body of essential learning in each of these curriculum areas which students should master, if they are to live and participate effectively in a modern technological society such as exists in Australia. It is not our purpose to define a core curriculum or to identify a common curriculum that would serve to limit and restrict to a narrow domain the teaching in the schools. Yet, it is necessary to recognize that the schools have an obligation to ensure that all students are able to participate effectively in society and that as many students as possible are adequately prepared in each of the four areas that form the foundations of further learning.

7.2 While the courses that are developed in each of these four curriculum areas must be acknowledged as providing the foundations for further learning, it is essential, the Committee believes, that the courses should be seen as complete in themselves and have a coherence and integrity of purpose in order to fulfil the needs of all students attending secondary schools in Years 8, 9 and 10. A recent report of the Schools Commission[1] has drawn attention in a very convincing way to the problems facing secondary schools, and the conclusions of this report are a challenge to all engaged in the preparation of curricula for the secondary schools to plan the redevelopment of the courses and the curricula at this stage of schooling. A major contention of the report is that the courses provided by the schools are academically oriented, serving, in the main, the purpose of providing a basis for tertiary study.

> Secondary schools seem pre-occupied with preparation for tertiary study. Only some 15 per cent of those who enter secondary schools continue their full-time studies at universities or colleges of advanced education in the year following the completion of their secondary schooling. Yet the preparation of students for the kind and manner of learning practised by these tertiary institutions so affects the whole of schooling that anything else is called 'alternative' or 'technical', and seen as inferior. Knowledge is too often considered valuable only because it prepares for higher formal study in the most direct way, rather than for its contribution to an understanding of the world as most people experience it[2].

The Committee does not question the truth of this statement. The evidence is too widespread. The Committee notes that the issues raised are not unique to Australia, since most countries with which Australia has been linked educationally, and from which Australia has derived its ideas for curriculum development have reported similar problems, and are engaged in a similar rethinking of their school curricula. However, we do not deny the importance for national development of the education of the most able in our society. The students from our schools who continue on to tertiary education do make a highly significant contribution to the life and the development of the nation.

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[1] Schools Commission. Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds. Canberra: The Commission, 1980.

[2] ibid. p.7.

Indeed, Australia, with a high standard of living and a high level of costs of production, is dependent on its most academically gifted to ensure that it keeps abreast of technological development and, if possible, plays an innovative role in such development to guarantee a rising level of productivity within the country. Yet a country is unwise if it sacrifices the education of the vast majority of its youth in order to provide an education for the few. Nevertheless, the schools must be careful not to close all options for students by directing their interests away from the four areas referred to above as areas of fundamental learning. These are the curriculum areas that all should study in order to ensure that each student has the maximum flexibility and range of options for further study and employment.

7.3 The first step in the development of an appropriate solution to this major problem facing secondary education in South Australia has been to free the schools to develop their own programs and courses. This task is, however, considerably more difficult and complex than has been assumed. Not only is it extremely time consuming, but it is also now appearing probable that few teachers in South Australian secondary schools have received the training in programs of teacher education, or had experience outside the narrow confines of schooling and tertiary study that would permit them to undertake such curriculum development successfully in order to satisfy the wide range of student interests and abilities. A second move that has been made towards developing an appropriate solution in South Australian schools, that is dependent on the first, has been to allow schools to focus on specific areas of learning, and through the dezoning of schools and the removal of restrictions that required a student to attend his neighbourhood school, students are now freer to choose to enrol at a school that provides courses to meet their particular needs. In its first report the Committee endorsed these policies in relation to curriculum choice at the upper secondary school level[3]. At the present time secondary schools in South Australia are able to identify the requirements of the students in the district they serve, and provide an appropriate range of courses to meet the needs of the students they attract. There is, however, the likelihood that schools offering highly academically oriented courses will enjoy a higher status among parents and within the community than a school that provides programs more appropriate for the needs and interests of its less able students. Thus it is evident that it would be inappropriate to permit a school to cater solely for an exclusive group of students. Moreover, it would be inappropriate within a district to permit a pattern of schooling to develop so that the full range of alternative programs required was not provided within the district. The maintenance of an appropriate balance in the programs offered by schools is clearly a matter for the Regional Director to co-ordinate. However, it is also essential that secondary schools should preserve reasonable options for their students to ensure that they are able to continue with their education beyond the Year 10 level if they wish.

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[3] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp. 16-12 and 16-13.

7.4 The Committee suggests some general principles associated with the development of curricula at this level that would assist with the preparation of sound guidelines for courses of instruction. First, the number of key ideas and relationships to be presented in a course should be as far as possible reduced, and the courses should not be allowed to become cluttered up with trivia. Secondly, the practical applications of these key ideas to the students' world and the society in which they live should be fully explored and developed in the courses that the students study. Education is a process in which ideas are used and applied in the students' experience, not simply a transfer of information and skills from the teacher to the student. Thirdly, depending on a student's needs and interests the education that is received should be seen to be meaningful by students, parents and employers and relevant for the students' present lives as well as for their future lives as adults in Australian society. The importance to many students of courses built around vocationally oriented skills would appear to be that those skills are perceived to be leading to a world in which they will find a place, as well as being something that they can master at the present time. The deferred value of much academic learning is not readily accepted by many students. The relevance of such learning is difficult to perceive, and the intellectual skills associated with using this learning are difficult for many to master, so that some students all too readily experience a sense of frustration. Fourthly, in any course undertaken by a student, a sense of confidence must be developed, through mastery of the cognitive and practical skills being taught, together with a sense of expectation that the ideas and skills presented will be useful both at the present time and in future employment. Fifthly, it is important, in the courses undertaken by a student, that the process of learning is not merely a passive exercise in which the students are required to absorb the information presented, but a more active one in which the students are led to think about what they are doing and the ways in which they are learning. Thus, they must learn to analyse and evaluate their learning, as well as to diagnose their learning problems. Sixthly, the importance of developing problem solving skills cannot be denied. The course of instruction in each particular curriculum area must provide opportunities for problem solving, and for discussion of appropriate solutions to problems of different kinds and at various levels. Only through practice in problem solving tasks will students gradually improve their skills in problem solving and establish confidence in their ability to do so. Finally, the curricula that are developed for the schools must give the students a sense of self-determination and personal autonomy in what they choose to learn at school, provided the students and their parents are fully informed about the consequences of their choice. Courses of instruction cannot be effectively decreed from above for the schools to follow, nor can they be made obligatory within a school so that no teacher in a classroom and no student has a choice. Both between subjects and within subjects there must be a sufficient range of options so that students perceive that they have a say, based on sound information, over what they are learning. Thus the students must be provided with a choice of subjects from among alternatives and a choice of topics and activities from within the units that comprise the course. The ever present danger in curriculum development is that courses become so overburdened with information that there is little time for other aspects of learning to receive adequate attention. This danger can be greatly reduced by the provision of choice of subjects and of units within subjects.

7.5 One of the difficulties associated with the provision of effective choices for students in the school curriculum is that the courses or subjects provided are, in the main, built around a timetable that provides for six periods a week in a subject throughout a school year. Sometimes, courses that would provide effective choices for students could be developed around fewer periods per week and for shorter periods than a school year, occupying perhaps only a semester or half year, a term, or only a few weeks. Greater flexibility in the development of the timetable of a school would permit a far greater range of minor subjects to be offered, that would provide students with real choices. Some schools are already experimenting with a more flexible school timetable, and with the introduction of minor subjects which occupy less than six periods per week and run for only a term or a half year. Other schools are operating a more flexible schoolday commencing at 7.30 in the morning and running until 5 o'clock in the afternoon to provide a greater range of options for their students. Nevertheless, it is important that in all secondary schools the four areas of foundation learning retain their place and strength in the curriculum to ensure that students receive a sound education in the areas of language, science, mathematics and social learning.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R7.1 (a) the secondary school curriculum should give recognition to the four areas of foundation learning - language, science, mathematics and social learning;

(b) recommended curricula should be developed for use in schools in the four areas of foundation learning; and

(c) greater flexibility should be introduced into the timetable of the secondary school to permit small units of instruction to be presented, that would provide options for students to study minor courses occupying less than six periods a week for a few weeks, a term or a half year.

## The Four Areas of Foundation Learning

7.6 In each of the four areas of foundation learning that we identified in the opening paragraph of this chapter there are issues that need to be taken into consideration in the planning of curricula for teaching and learning in the secondary schools. Some of these issues have been touched on in the Into the 80s statement of the Education Department. Nevertheless, that statement was not concerned with the raising and discussion of issues, but rather with the clear identification of the purposes of schools. The Committee would not wish to contradict this statement or to challenge the ideas presented, apart from those it has already considered in Chapter 3 of this report. However, in relation to certain economic, demographic, technological and societal influences, the Committee would wish to emphasize issues that need to be taken into consideration in the development of new and challenging curricula at the secondary school level. It is not our purpose to propose the development of soft options or attractive alternative programs to entertain students. Nor is it our belief that this is what students, in general, wish. What we are suggesting is that gradually a range of courses should be evolved that are regarded as being worthwhile and challenging by all students, by their parents and by employers. Furthermore, it is important that these courses should be so developed that they are seen by the wider community served by the schools as being relevant to and consistent with societal needs and the developments that are likely to be occurring in South Australia, in particular.

## The Acquisition of Language Skills

7.7 It is clearly essential that all students in schools in this State achieve a basic level of mastery of the English language whether they have an ethnic background, are of Aboriginal origin, have physical and emotional handicaps, or certain learning disabilities. It would be hoped that most students coming from primary schools had achieved a satisfactory level of mastery in the use of the written and spoken word in English to enable them to undertake independent learning. However, there will be problems involving the need for maintenance of these skills by some, and the need for further efforts to ensure that a basic level of mastery is achieved by others. Remedial programs of a variety of kinds will, without doubt, continue to be needed.

7.8 The importance of the development of a high level of proficiency in the use of the written language and in the verbal skills associated with different forms of writing can not be over emphasized. What all too frequently appears to be lacking in schools is the provision of experience in writing and in the revision and editing of the written word to ensure that the meaning is clear. However, not all opportunities for writing need to be provided in the classroom during the hours of formal schooling. Because of the difficulty of carrying out such a task in a tightly specified period of time, some writing tasks at the secondary school level should continue to be undertaken as extra-classroom assignments. The teaching of efficient reading skills is commonly overlooked at the secondary school level, and since materials are available to improve reading skills it would seem essential that an emphasis was placed on such work. Moreover, the skills of speaking and listening cannot be ignored. They are becoming of increasing importance, and there is clear evidence that they can be taught and learnt in schools. What would appear to be lacking is a clear specification of the range of verbal skills that should be developed in schools, including their use as vehicles for thought, feeling and imagination. Following the listing of the skills, it is clearly necessary to specify teaching and learning situations and experiences, for example, drama classes, which can be used to develop all skills across the range, and to encourage teachers to check their teaching practices to ensure that they are helping to develop the whole range of skills.

7.9 There are other skills of communication that are non-verbal in nature, since people often communicate by manner, gesture and inflexion. Since such skills are becoming increasingly important in our society, as we depend more and more on pictorial and visual methods of communication, the development of these skills can provide an extremely interesting and challenging form of both learning and teaching. Video-recording is now such a relatively simple process, that where once play productions were among the few ways that schools could be encouraged to undertake such teaching, now exciting and lively alternatives are readily available that have excellent educational value. The curriculum materials being developed for use in schools overseas will help to open up a new and exciting field for work in South Australian secondary schools[4]. The relevance of work in this area of communication skills would, we believe, be quickly apparent to a generation of young people who spend a significant part of their lives listening to music and watching television.

7.10 Australians, in general, have lived for too long in situations in which it has been unnecessary to communicate in a language other than English. However, our orientations are increasingly away from England and to some extent the United States, and more towards the non-English-speaking world of Asia. Consequently it is important that, while at school, as many students as possible should gain some experience in learning to speak and to read a foreign language. The range of languages that might be learnt is very wide, with strong claims from many students of ethnic origin to learn the language of their forbears. While it would seem highly desirable for the number of languages taught in South Australian schools to be maintained to cover student demand, there are very substantial difficulties associated with providing a continuing body of teachers who can not only teach the courses in schools but also provide worthwhile curriculum materials. It would seem well-nigh impossible to maintain on-going courses of foreign language instruction at the primary school level, and as a consequence, the learning of foreign languages must, in general, begin at secondary level. With so many languages as candidates for inclusion in the curriculum of secondary schools, it is desirable that where possible schools should be encouraged to teach at least one foreign language, with the proviso that a language is only taught in response to an acknowledged student or community need, and that appropriate staff are likely to be available to maintain an on-going course throughout the school. An alternative is emerging through the programs sponsored by the Schools Commission which provide support for community groups to conduct, as extra-curricula activity, sometimes in school buildings and sometimes in community halls and rooms, courses of instruction in the different ethnic languages. It is undesirable to separate instruction in language development from instruction in the ethnic culture at this stage. Each aspect is of importance and both are complementary to the other. However, the need to achieve a level of proficiency in a foreign language, in a manner that is educationally sound and that would enable other foreign languages to be learnt more readily if required, is of sufficient consequence in Australia's future development, for it to be mandatory that an emphasis should be given in

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4. See for example Lorac, C. and Weiss, M. Communication and Social Skills. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981 (a product of the Schools Council Communication and Social Skills Project).

such language courses to instruction in language usage. Such courses that are given outside the school need to be publicly recognized by the school, and a student's level of performance in such a foreign language acknowledged as being of equivalent standing to the courses offered more formally by the school. This would involve, for example, the recognition of such courses in the School Leaver Statement.

## The Physical World and the Natural Environment

7.11 In Chapter 3 of the first report, the dependence of the State of South Australia on science and technology was considered. Furthermore, with limits to the supply of water, arable land and fishing zones, the people of the State must of necessity come to understand their natural environment and conserve the limited natural resources which appear to be available to them. It is beyond reasonable doubt that the economic future of the State, and thus the well-being of the people living within the State, is, in part, dependent upon the teaching of science in its schools. Not only does the State clearly need leaders in the fields of science and technology to ensure that it is in a position to profit from the technological development that is envisaged during the coming decades, but the State also needs persons with a sound understanding of the issues associated with the use of science and technological development, together with the dangers of a failure to conserve resources and preserve the natural environment, in order that sound decisions are made at all levels of public and private decision making. In this context it is evident that the science to be taught in schools should not be seen as an encyclopaedic body of information to be passed on to students in the secondary schools of the State. Thus, secondary school science should no longer be regarded as a fixed body of knowledge which students at school need to learn in order to understand the world in which they live or which they should master if they wished to become scientists. The importance of science in the curriculum is not in question, but there must at this time be an emphasis on its applications and social relevance, and a continuation of the reduction of the boundaries between the individual sciences and between the sciences and other forms of knowledge. Nevertheless, at this stage many students are beginning the rigorous study of the basic science and it is essential that a thorough grounding of a limited number of key concepts and relationships is obtained. In many respects the science curricular materials used in South Australian schools are ahead of those in use in other parts of the world. Attempts have been made to teach an integrated science for a relatively long period and none of the individual sciences is ignored. The Australian Science Education Project materials have sought to emphasize the applications and social consequences of science and to raise broader issues. There is, nevertheless, a need to re-examine critically the present teaching of science, and the curriculum materials that are available to ensure that the science currently taught in schools is relevant to the needs and interests of the wide range of students who are studying the subject and, in particular, the more able. No revision of the science curricula has been carried out for nearly a decade. For many students there could be with profit a greater emphasis on technology and the social consequences of technological change. The question of increased participation by girls in learning science is a separate issue that will be considered in Chapter 10 of this report.

## Relations of Number and Space

7.12 There is little doubt that our society is becoming increasingly dependent on the mathematical skills of many of its members. The widespread availability of calculators has eliminated the need for speed and accuracy in arithmetical computation, and automated machinery and made-up parts and fittings have reduced the need to measure and to calculate. However, where there is a task that requires an optimization of working conditions or the calculation of a degree of risk, then that task can now be undertaken with greater precision or greater likelihood of a correct decision being made, if the task has been assessed through the use of mathematical relationships. Mathematics is in essence a system for solving problems that are of relevance to man's life and work by the use of ideas relating to quantity and space, together with the expression of these ideas and their inter-relations in symbolic form, the transformation of that relationship, and its translation back into terms for effective use. The type of mathematics that is of importance in society at a particular time necessarily depends on the types of problems that the society wishes to solve. New problems have recently emerged in our society arising from a greater facility to calculate probabilities and to optimize conditions for success rather than the use of mere guesswork or intuition and experience. The greater facility to calculate has resulted from the advent of computers, and computers have brought with them new approaches to old problems, new problems that could not previously be considered, and new situations that have generated new problems. A substantial number of the tasks that we perform are amenable to an examination in mathematical terms. Whether or not we act on the basis of previous experience or whether we endeavour to re-examine the problem in a mathematical way depends in the main on the costs, usually a financial consequence of making a mistake, of not performing the task under optimal conditions. Thus mathematics has become an approach to the solving of problems both of a simple and complex kind in a wide variety of situations.

Where once the advantages of studying mathematics at school were for training in logic or training to undertake engineering and scientific work, now with the availability of greater facility for computation and simulation flowing from the introduction of computers, the benefits arising from the study of mathematics have been augmented significantly and apply to a very wide range of fields. Fields where mathematics is becoming increasingly important include economics, accounting and finance, and management where optimal conditions of operation are sought. In the past not many students could envisage using mathematical ideas at the level of sophistication necessary for success in problem solving. Now, with the rapidly increasing availability of computers of various sizes and power, the need for mathematical skills to facilitate the solving of an increasingly wide range of problems in daily life has meant that mathematics is no longer a subject to be studied only by the most able, but a system for solving problems that substantial numbers would benefit from if they could acquire the necessary skills. Thus it is anticipated that the need for mathematics learning will rapidly increase, and that the nature of the mathematics to be learnt will rapidly change.

7.13 There is, however, a level of mathematics learning relating to the use of number, spatial relations and the measurement of distance and time, that all should master, not so much for further learning, but rather for operating effectively in the simple activities of daily life. To achieve this level it is essential to possess certain skills which must be thoroughly learned and practised, and an understanding must be acquired of the situations in which these skills can be used. This level of performance in mathematics should be achieved by all students before they leave school.

7.14 Most students at the secondary school level have access to simple electronic calculating devices. Clearly there is an urgent need for schools to examine their curricula to take account of the methods of learning that students are developing independently of school through the use of calculators and computers. The ease with which students can now perform quite complex operations with numbers merely by pressing the appropriate keys on a calculator must inevitably transform the way in which they think about numbers and the operations that can be performed with numbers. Not only can much of the tedious work of learning arithmetic and mathematics be eliminated, but some of the problems associated with learning and understanding of mathematical operations could be removed by devising new methods of teaching that would take into account the manner in which children are now able to work with numbers. Too often, however, teachers deplore the arrival of these new devices and refuse to allow their use until the old tedious methods have been mastered. Furthermore, new processes such as those employed in simple statistics can now be taught because the calculations are no longer tedious and time consuming with a simple calculator. As a consequence the relationships between the numbers become more readily apparent. The main issue now associated with the development of new curricular approaches to mathematics teaching, which flow from the availability of simple calculators and computers, will be the competence and confidence of teachers to adjust to these new approaches and new methods, not with the ability of students to learn the new methods.

## Learning about Society

7.15 In Chapter 3 of this report we discussed the approach advanced by Skilbeck concerned with the need to build a socio-cultural map of our society and to provide for each individual an understanding of his place on that map and within our society. In the process of building a socio-cultural map, we envisage that attention would be given to Australia's place in a world setting including the socio-cultural traditions of those groups of different ethnic traditions who make up Australian society today. In addition, the socio-cultural traditions of those national groups in South East Asia with whom Australians must increasingly maintain commercial and political relations should be considered. In addition, we believe that it would be important to develop an understanding of changes in the socio-cultural map over time, particularly over the past two centuries and up to the present day, with the building up of some understanding of how the past has influenced the present. Of greatest significance, however, would be the establishment of an understanding of the various institutions in Australian society, the nature, as far as is possible, of Australian culture and the place and role of the individual person in Australia today. We recognize that Skilbeck had an even grander vision of this aspect of the school curriculum and saw it occupying a more central place in the total curriculum. Nevertheless, the ideas that he presented were in embryonic form. We accept the importance of these ideas, with relatively few historical and socio-educational principles to be comprehended but in a rich and varied sequence of contexts. However, the courses or curricula associated with these ideas should, we suggest, only occupy a part of the total curriculum of the secondary school. Yet we would acknowledge that through the development of a socio-cultural map and only through that development will students make sense of the learning of language skills in English and in a language other than English, the learning of science comprising both a study of the physical world and the natural environment, together with learning about modern technological developments and their likely impact on Australian life, and the learning of mathematics and its changing role associated with the solving of problems.

7.16 The importance of these curriculum areas as the foundations of the program of secondary schools is, in part, dependent on the contribution that these areas currently make and are likely to make in the foreseeable future to life in our society. However, we recognize that many ideas considered are complex, possibly too complex, to be built in to the secondary school curriculum. Perhaps all that can be achieved is to lay some foundations in these curriculum areas and make it clear that education is a lifelong process which will enable these ideas to be amplified and elaborated during later stages of education whether at school, in tertiary institutions, or in programs of continuing education.

## Planning Curriculum Development

7.17 The development of appropriate curricula in these four curriculum areas would be a major undertaking, but for the fact that there is a great deal of extremely valuable work already going on in secondary schools in these areas. Furthermore, experience has shown the difficulty of implementing change too rapidly, because teacher inservice programs are both time-consuming and costly. What is required is consensus amongst interested parties with regard to the general nature and direction of change followed by the planned and gradual implementation of the agreed program of change. The Committee envisages that through the central Curriculum Committees and the Curriculum Conferences and Working Parties in each of the Regional Directorates it should be possible to proceed in the directions outlined above. By building on the best of current practice in the schools we would envisage that each central Curriculum Committee could develop for each of the four curriculum areas a limited number of alternative curriculum guides, statements of objectives, and curriculum materials for use by schools, and so provide schools with leadership and guidance in the planning of their curricula in these four highly important curriculum areas. It is clearly too great a task for each school to attempt to develop appropriate courses without very considerable help from curriculum consultants. Nevertheless, a single centrally prescribed all-purpose course in each of the four curriculum areas would fail to meet the needs of students of a wide range of interests and aptitudes. Previous attempts to develop such all-purpose courses, or the establishment of different types of schools have failed in the past. What is required is the development of several recommended courses in each of the four curriculum areas, so that schools have clear guidelines and sound curriculum materials that they can use to meet the needs and circumstances of their students. Moreover, it is important that the recommended courses contain a sufficient number of alternative segments or modules to enable a school that chose to follow a particular course to maintain a sufficient degree of flexibility thereby ensuring that the interests and needs of its different groups of students were adequately met. Alternatively in some curriculum areas it might well be desirable for a school to undertake streaming or setting of students into appropriate interest and ability groups. In this way, two or more recommended courses could be used in the provision of suitable learning programs for the students of the school. It is clear that within the framework suggested above each school at the secondary school level has some freedom to build appropriate courses for its students. However, each school has a responsibility to ensure that the courses it provides are appropriate and meet the expectations of the students and their parents which should include the opportunity to prepare for academic study at the upper secondary school level. However, the present tendency to emphasize mainly the needs of the academically oriented group must be rejected. Likewise, the unsatisfactory approach of developing a 'watered down' academic course that is readily constructed but is largely unrelated to the students' interests and needs must clearly be avoided. However, the task is not an impossible one. There are some schools that are conducting good courses for certain groups of students and it is the task of the central Curriculum Committees and their counterparts, the regional Curriculum Conferences and Working Parties, to identify these schools and their courses, and to use their work as a basis for the development of recommended courses.

7.18 The question of continuity and progression from one year level to the next across Years 8, 9 and 10 is of particular importance for the academically oriented group of students. Likewise the portability of learning achieved across schools conducting similar programs but located in different districts is of consequence for those planning to proceed to tertiary study after completing upper secondary schooling. Courses for these students are generally well developed and highly satisfactory, and the construction of appropriate recommended courses to serve these students should not be a difficult undertaking. What would be important with respect to such courses, is the planned evolution of the course along lines agreed by consensus among the interested groups, so that trials and developmental work were always going on in some schools. It is difficult to see how gradual curriculum development could take place other than through a substantial body of trial work being undertaken in schools. Major curriculum changes may from time to time be required in the future, but the lessons learnt from overseas programs during the past 20 years indicate that such an approach cannot guarantee success or even widespread acceptance. If change is to occur it must, in general, be carried out gradually. Similar general strategies for curriculum development will apply for less academically oriented courses. However, for less able students more radical changes are probably needed and some fundamental rethinking of the nature and the purpose of the courses being offered is required. Nevertheless, it will always be important for schools to ensure that they do not prematurely prevent students from following courses that at a later stage may be of interest to them. In this paragraph, we have emphasized the development of courses which form a preparation for entry into higher education because we cannot deny the importance of such preparation for the small proportion, an overall 15 to 20 per cent, who will proceed to higher education and on whom much of future national well-being will depend. The proportion requiring an academically oriented program is greater in some schools than in others. Thus it is essential that schools should have some freedom and flexibility in the courses they choose to offer. However, it is also essential that the needs of the non-academically oriented are recognized in ways that are not common practice in Australian schools today. The procedures that the Committee has proposed in Chapter 4 for schools to develop their own courses, where they might wish to do so, are extremely important if new curricula are to evolve. Consequently, it is essential that those schools undertaking curriculum development in these four areas of fundamental learning at the secondary school level, namely, language, science, mathematics and social learning, should seek to make a significant contribution.

7.19 One of the deficiencies of current methods of teaching is associated with a failure to direct the learning activities and experiences provided for students towards the development of more specific cognitive and practical skills. In the past there has been too much emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. While we cannot conceive of the development of such skills without a basis in knowledge, we recognize that the acquisition of facts and information without the skills of interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, to use terms that are now well accepted and have a specific meaning[5], has rendered much former schooling largely ineffective. However, besides these cognitive skills there are such practical skills associated with the ability to work alone, the ability to work in groups, the ability to observe accurately, and the ability to solve a practical problem through diagnosis and testing of alternative possible causes. Unfortunately in the development of school curricula in the past, the emphasis has been on the content to be covered and not on the systematic identification of cognitive and practical skills, the development of learning experiences to teach these skills, and the construction of practical tasks to assess that students have achieved mastery of the skills being taught. A recently published pamphlet titled The Practical Curriculum draws attention to these tasks that confront teachers and curriculum developers:

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[5] See Bloom, B.S. et al. *A Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain*. London: Longman, 1956.

> Schools need to decide and state exactly what skills they do hope to develop in each of the main areas of experience they are concerned with. ... Looking at the curriculum in this way, as a number of skills to be mastered, provides a basis for planning as well as self-assessment. A general example may suggest how this might work in practice. One group of skills is concerned with observing, measuring, weighing, recording, interpreting and commenting. Other groups include describing and explaining, abstracting and analysing, designing, making and testing. Almost all subjects could help to develop these (skills).[6]

While this statement was written with specific reference to primary schooling, we believe that the views advanced relate to the problems currently being encountered in Australian secondary schools. As a consequence we believe that secondary schools should emphasize the development of such skills and that teachers at this level would be more effective in their teaching, if in the planning of school curricula the pursuit of certain types and levels of skills became an important dimension.

## The Teaching of Modern Languages

7.20 During the past decade there has been some fundamental rethinking about the processes involved in the learning of a second language and as a conseqence there have been associated developments in language teaching methods in Britain, Europe and North America.[7] These new approaches have as their starting point the needs of the learner and the definition of the learning task in terms of language functions such as "seeking information" and "making a request". The learning task is defined in communicative terms, rather than in grammatical or lexical terms. The functional approach to syllabus design has been very productive and has stimulated the development of graded syllabuses and tests which indicate what a learner should be able to do or know at the end of each stage of learning. Such syllabuses raise questions about how modern

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6. Schools Council. The Practical Curriculum. Schools Council Working Paper 70. London: Methuen, 1981, p.23.
7. Munby, J. Communicative Skill Design, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

languages are taught in schools, and it is evident that major changes are needed in the philosophy, methodology and organization of language teaching in South Australia. In general, the teaching of modern languages will start at the beginning of the secondary school level and for many students will form an important component of the foundation learning curriculum area concerned with language. There is an important place for modern language teaching in South Australian schools, if the needs of English-speaking people to develop a proficiency in at least one modern language, and of people of ethnic background to achieve competence in the languge of their country of origin, are to be met. The skill of effective communication in languages other than English is one of considerable importance if Australians are to work on an equal basis with their counterparts overseas in the fields of commerce, industry and international affairs. Consequently, the Committee would advocate the establishment of a Working Party to examine the place of modern languages in the curriculum of South Australian secondary schools, and to develop curriculum guidelines, statements of objectives and tests to assess stages of learning achieved for the teaching of the different modern languages. The implementation of change in this area will depend on the success with which inservice programs are conducted.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R7.2 (a) a Working Party should be established to examine the place of modern languages in the curriculum of secondary schools;

(b) the Working Party should undertake the development of curriculum guidelines, statements of objectives and tests to assess stages of learning for the teaching of the different modern languages; and

(c) consideration should be given to the conducting of inservice programs to implement the changes proposed in the teaching of modern languages.

### The Problem of Time

7.21 For a century or more the importance of time available for learning in schools has been recognized, and periodically descriptive studies have been undertaken to determine how school time was being allocated to different subjects and how the allocation of time varied from school to school. In the main, until recently in South Australian schools, the time to be given to the study of different subjects has been laid down in curriculum guidelines, and inspectors in their visits to schools have made checks of school timetables to see that the guidelines were being adhered to. However, as a consequence of the disestablishment of the inspectorial system, together with both the freedom given to schools to be responsible for their own program and a general questioning of the importance of time available for learning, and perhaps of learning outcomes as well, schools have started to vary significantly in the time that they are allocating to different areas of the curriculum. In recent years a considerable body of research evidence has been accumulated to establish that time allocated to learning in all its different aspects (by the curriculum, by the teacher, by the students to homework, and by time on task in the classroom, as well as by such indices as opportunity to learn material tested, and academic learning time in the classroom) is directly and significantly related to achievement outcomes.[8] There is thus no ground for challenging, what has perhaps been self-evident to many for a long period, that the allocation of time to learning in different areas of the curriculum and the more efficient use of time by teachers and students are major factors, perhaps the most malleable or alterable factors, influencing student learning. The Committee has, however, noted from a report on secondary school subject choice the marked variation that exists in the time given to a subject such as mathematics in the curricula of secondary schools in South Australia.[9] It would seem that there is a lack of awareness of the significance of matters relating to time in the curriculum planning of schools at the secondary school level.

7.22 As a consequence it is essential in curriculum planning for clear recognition to be given, in all matters that are related to achievement and learning in schools, to the time allowed for learning in a curriculum area, the efficient use of the time allocated by both students and teachers, and the efficient use of time given to additional learning outside the classroom, as well as the amount of time given to this purpose. Thus, it is essential that, in the development of recommended curricula at the secondary school level, consideration should be given to the time to be assigned to study in each of the four areas of the curriculum that provide a foundation for further learning, namely, language, science, mathematics and social learning. Furthermore, it is necessary that consideration should be given in curriculum development to the appropriate balance of allocated time given to learning in the four areas of the curriculum considered above. The Committee believes these four areas to be of sufficient importance as to require that approximately two-thirds of the time available should be given at the secondary school level to learning

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8. For a review and excellent discussion of some of the research in this area see: Borg, W.R. Time and School Learning. In C. Denham and A.Lieberman (eds.), Time to Learn. Washington: National Institute of Education, 1980, pp.33-72.
9. South Australia, Education Department. First Stage Report of the Committee on Secondary Subject Choice, (mimeo), July 1980.

in these four areas. While the Committee is reluctant to prescribe the exact proportions of time to be given to each area, it believes that each should receive approximately equal emphasis in the curriculum. However, the Committee also recognizes that certain groups of students may have greater needs in one specific area rather than another, and for this reason could well have a greater proportion of the time available assigned to learning in that area. Furthermore, the Committee recognizes that for some students it might be desirable to devise an integrated or partially integrated curriculum across these four areas. Such an integrated curriculum, while difficult to construct, could have considerable merit, and should, in general, be ascribed two-thirds of the time available.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R7.3 (a) approximately two-thirds of the time available for learning in schools should be given to learning in the four curriculum areas of foundation learning in language, science, mathematics and social learning;

(b) the time allocated to the four curriculum areas of foundation learning should be assigned equally to the four areas, unless students have a particular need for additional time to be given to one specific area; and

(c) as is consistent with the above time allocations, curricula which are integrated across the four areas of foundation learning may be developed to meet particular needs and circumstances.

7.23 The Committee believes that regular homework can make a significant contribution to student learning at the secondary school level, particularly in the areas of foundation learning of language, science, mathematics and social learning. While the Committee would not wish to propose or recommend the amount of time that should be given to homework, it does consider that the setting of homework on a regular basis, the general supervision of the homework from within the home, and the provision of good working conditions in the home, together with the examination of the homework done in the classroom, do contribute to successful learning at school.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R7.4 (a) homework should be set regularly in the four areas of foundation learning of language, science, mathematics and social learning;

(b) parents should provide good working conditions for students to study in their homes, and parents should supervise and encourage home study; and

(c) teachers should examine and correct the homework done within the classroom as soon as possible after the work was set.

7.24 Since time is of such importance in student learning, teachers could well start to examine critically their teaching methods through obtaining information on how much time is given to different types of classroom activity both on their part and on the part of the pupils in their classes. In addition, consideration should be given to the assessment of the relative effectiveness of different activities in which they and their students engage. Effectiveness should be judged both in terms of student learning, particularly with respect to the acquisition of specific skills, as well as student attitudes and interest towards learning. From such information on exactly how the time available for learning is being spent, it is suggested that each teacher will gradually develop an awareness of the effectiveness of the different teaching methods that are used, and thus over time change methods of teaching to increase the effective use of the time available for learning.

## Moral Reasoning and Action, Value and Belief Systems

7.25 As students enter the secondary school and move towards the end of the period of compulsory schooling, it becomes increasingly important, both as a civic necessity and as an essential part of their education as individuals for a complete life, that they should develop a morality and the capacity to discriminate amongst different value and belief systems. As children, their moral education has largely been a training in habits and routine behaviours. However, as students increase in age and move towards adulthood it is desirable that they develop the capacity to reflect on their actions, analyse the consequences of these actions and learn to accept full responsibility for their actions. Related to the growth of these capabilities for moral reasoning and action is the development of a commitment to a value system. The values developed will clearly have links with the curriculum areas considered above. For example, learning about society should raise issues associated with the development of democratic values, or learning about science should lead to the consideration of certain beliefs about the nature of the universe and of Man's place in it. An important facet of this latter view of Man is concerned with control over the environment, or whether Man only acts as a consequence of a pre-determined sequence of events. Recent Australian research has found that student attitudes with respect to Man's control over the environment have declined significantly over the fourteen year period from 1964 to 1978 at both the 13 year-old and the terminal secondary school levels.[10] This study provides evidence that attitudes and values of students at school do change over time. Whether they reflect changes in attitudes and values held by all members of society, or whether the changes are a consequence of the direct programs of the schools or of the 'hidden curriculum' of the schools is not known. There is, however, a need for our society to identify some of the values it wishes to inculcate, to determine whether attitudes and values can be changed through the programs of the schools, as it would appear they can, and to foster a commitment to those values amongst students in schools. There are, however, some value systems such as those of the Christian faith that do not receive universal acceptance within our society. There is nevertheless a need, because of the long standing traditions of our society, for such value systems to be presented in some form to students in our schools, but without indoctrination.

### Work, Leisure and Lifestyle

7.26 In Chapter 13 of the first report attention was given to issues associated with educating for leisure and it would seem unnecessary to provide further discussion on this aspect in this report. It is, however, worthy of comment that while the colleges of technical and further education have expressed strong support for the views advanced by the Committee in this chapter, the schools have indicated to the Committee little concern or interest in the area. The only reference to the area in the statement Into the 80s is a passing one on the need to provide opportunities for students "to develop skills for recreational use" and "to have experiences and undertake studies aimed towards work, leisure and life skills"[11]. The Committee would, however, see a need for a stronger and different emphasis on the area of leisure and life style, since it believes that the constructive use of leisure time is both an important facet of life at the present time and for the future.

7.27 The Committee endorses to the full the need to provide programs in the area of transition education, but would argue that such programs have a more important function at the upper secondary school stage than during the years of secondary schooling in Years 8, 9 and 10. Nevertheless, the Committee would acknowledge the need to commence a program in the area of transition education at the secondary school stage. In its first report the Committee was critical of the work of the Transition Education Unit in South Australia basing its judgement of the work of the unit on written documents presented to it and, in particular, on an evaluation report that at the time the first report was in preparation was regarded as confidential. This report has since been released.[12] Criticism of the work of the Transition Education Unit should not be taken as disparagement of the valuable work being undertaken in many of the schools that we visited, nor as an indication of a lack of interest or concern for the area on the part of the Committee.

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[10] Rosier, M.J. Changes in Secondary School Mathematics in Australia 1964-1978. ACER Research Minograph No.8. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1980.

[11] South Australia, Education Department. Into the 80s. 1981. op cit., p.21 and p.25.

7.28 Blackburn in considering changing educational emphases for the 1980s has recently drawn attention to the remarkable absence in the whole curriculum of the schools of any study of work as a major human activity and she comments:

> Students gain little assistance in understanding the effects of technological change, why different kinds of work command different rewards and are performed under different conditions, why some important work like child rearing is unpaid, what the role of trade unions is, how major investment decisions affecting the availability and nature of work are made.[13]

Society appears to be entering a phase in which full-time employment is not going to be available for a considerable proportion of those who would wish to engage in such work, including not only a significant number of early school leavers, but also many who have had to retire prematurely, and many who have not the skills to perform anything but unskilled tasks. It is evident that an understanding about the nature and functions of work in our society and issues relating to the availability of employment needs to be developed by youth before they leave school. Consequently, it is appropriate in the development of courses at the secondary school level to include a component that not only provides information on careers and opportunities to engage in work experience programs, but also provides a consideration of work and its nature and purpose and its relations with education and leisure. Coherent programs in the whole area, which includes what is becoming known as transition education, have yet to be developed.

## Arts and Crafts

7.29 Secondary schools for a long period have had courses that cover a wide and diverse area including music, art, drama, wood and metal crafts and many others. For some the importance of such experiences during secondary school is related to the development of an aesthetic appreciation as well as providing an opportunity for creative activity. What is not acknowledged, we believe, by many who are engaged in educational planning is the function of programs in this area, and in particular in certain craft fields, for the acquisition of specific practical skills that are not only valued in their own right but are seen as a link to the adult world. The success in the past of metal work courses, or typing and secretarial courses, or home economics courses at the secondary school level lay in the practical skills that were taught and were mastered by the students. The obvious utility of the vocationally oriented skills that were acquired, for handling machinery, typing a letter, cooking a meal or making a dress, also in the past led to the obtaining of employment on leaving school. Many of the skills taught no longer have a direct vocational utility, but the disestablishment of the Technical High Schools in South Australia, left a vacuum that has not as yet been filled. The Committee accepts the warnings advanced recently by Professor Karmel that the teaching of vocational skills will not of itself create employment, and that many of the skills that could be taught in vocational secondary schools are likely to become obsolete in the foreseeable future, and hence courses teaching these skills are likely to be misleading.[14] The value of such vocationally oriented courses would appear to have lain in the past in the development of more positive attitudes towards work and in providing practical activities that were necessary alternatives for non-academically oriented students. The task remains for the schools to develop more favourable attitudes to work and to provide a greater range of opportunities for the development of practical skills. However, the even greater challenge for the schools is to provide courses that youth in secondary schools see to be relevant to the world in which they live. The success of such courses as motor maintenance indicates that both relevant and practical skills have a strong appeal to youth, that may be unrelated to the opportunities likely to be available for employment in the future. Such courses would appear to be essential alternatives for inclusion in the curriculum area of Arts and Crafts.

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[12] De Bats, R., Blackburn, J., Martin, C., and Stans, C. Pathways from School to Society: A Review of the 1980 School to Work Transition Program in South Australia. Adelaide: TEASA, 1981.

[13] Blackburn, J. Changing Educational Emphasis for the 1980s. In P.H. Karmel (ed.), Education Change and Society. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1981, p.91.

## Health and Physical Education

7.30 The Committee must express surprise that so little attention was given to physical education in both the statements issued by the Curriculum

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[14] Karmel, P.H. Vocational Education Warning. Education News, 1981, 17(6): 32-33.

Development Centre in its report on Core Curriculum in Australian Schools[15] and by the Education Department in its policy statement Into the 80s[16]. The research undertaken by the Division of Human Nutrition of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in Adelaide has established the benefits of a daily physical education program for student health.[17] The need for a positive and preventative approach to student and community health cannot be denied. It is clear that appropriate programs of health and physical education are an essential component of the school curriculum at the secondary school level. Thus, the Committee commends to schools the policy of providing daily physical exercise for all students. In addition, at this level it would seem desirable to place an emphasis on fitness activities and on knowledge about the benefits of vigorous physical activity. Moreover, it is at the secondary school level that many students become interested in sporting activities and schools should provide for this interest through sporting programs which are conducted both within and between schools and that give opportunities for as many as possible to participate. These issues have been fully discussed in the recent report of a Committee of Enquiry into Physical Education and Sport in South Australian schools and we strongly support the general thrust of this report.[18]

## Areas of Experiential Learning

7.31 The Committee would envisage that the four areas of the curriculum considered above - moral reasoning and action; work, leisure and lifestyle; arts and crafts; health and physical education - should at the secondary school stage occupy together about one-third of the school week. It should be possible to phase the curricular activities discussed in this section in and out of the school program as circumstances demand. Considerable flexibility is needed in the planning of the daily, weekly or term school timetables, rather than resorting to the totally undesirable expedient of assigning to each of the areas a standard weekly allocation of say three periods per week throughout the secondary school years. It is evident that if maximum benefit is to be gained from curricular activities in these four areas of the curriculum, then a highly flexible timetable is required to develop imaginative programs in

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15. Curriculum Development Centre, Core Curriculum in Australian Schools, 1980. op. cit.
16. South Australia, Education Department, Into the 80s, 1981. op. cit.
17. Dwyer, T., Coonan, W.E., Leitch, D.R., and Hetzel, B.S. An investigation of the effects of daily physical activity on the health of primary school students in South Australia. (mimeo) 1981.
18. South Australia, Education Department. Committee of Enquiry into Physical Education and Sport in South Australian Schools. 1981. op. cit.

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these areas. It is of value for each of the central Curriculum Committees in the first instance to prepare guideline documents for programs in these areas as suggested curricula. These programs should be given a trial for a period of three years so that student groups might experience a full three-year program. Following this trial during which schools have the maximum freedom to innovate and experiment within the overall time constraints, it would be desirable for working parties to be established to help to prepare what would become recommended curricula in these areas for secondary schools. Schools should then be encouraged to conduct their programs within the recommended curriculum guidelines. However, if there were good reasons why a school should depart from the recommended curricula, including the undertaking of the development of an alternative and experimental program, it would be possible for a school to obtain approval of its alternative curriculum using procedures outlined in Chapter 4 and Chapter 12.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R7.5 (a) the secondary school curriculum should give recognition to the four areas of experiential learning - moral reasoning and action; work, leisure and lifestyle; arts and crafts; and health and physical education;

(b) approximately one-third of the time available for learning in schools should be given to learning in the four curriculum areas of experiential learning; and

(c) recommended curricula should be developed after a trial period of three years for courses in the four curriculum areas of experiential learning.

## External Examinations

7.32 The Committee has given some consideration to the possibility of introducing an external examination at the end of Year 10. However, while it recognizes the significance of a certificate to indicate level of school performance at the end of three years of secondary schooling, it also recognizes that, with such a high proportion of students remaining at school to the end of Year 10, no single examination in each of the four areas involving the foundations for further learning is likely to be satisfactory and could well have a detrimental effect on the attempts outlined above for the development of more appropriate courses for some students at this stage of schooling. Furthermore, the Committee does not see that the introduction of an internal examination at the Year 10 level such as that recommended by the Select

Committee of the Legislative Assembly in New South Wales[19] would serve useful purposes over and above those currently achieved by the School Leaver Statement in South Australia. The weight of evidence available would seem to indicate that any attempt to reintroduce an external examination would be difficult to make to work effectively, would probably be very expensive, and would in all probability lead some students to seek employment on the basis of the evidence of high performance in the examination, rather than remain at school for a further two years in order to complete an appropriate program at the Year 12 level. The Committee has advanced proposals on student assessment in Chapter 11, which it believes would be more appropriate than the reintroduction of an external examination during secondary schooling, or the introduction of an internal examination at the Year 10 level.

7.33 The Committee in its first report recommended that every effort should be made to convince both students and their parents that a complete secondary education involved a five-year program of schooling.[20] Thus the courses given in schools at the Year 10 level should not be seen as providing an end-point for education, but rather as the basis for transition to upper secondary education. Nevertheless, the courses offered in Years 8, 9 and 10 should be complete in themselves, and should not be directed towards preparation for tertiary studies, which for some might occur at the upper secondary school stage.

## Transition from Primary to Secondary School

7.34 The Committee was interested to learn during its visits to schools around the State that the issues of transition from primary to secondary school had been considered at both levels in the schools that it visited, and that very effective programs had been developed by most schools to ease the transition of students from primary to secondary schooling. It is now common practice for most students in Year 7 to spend some time in the secondary school that they are likely to attend, and for secondary school teachers to visit primary schools for discussions with students in Year 7. The Committee would see further benefit from teachers in Years 7 and 8 undertaking, from time to time, periods of exchange, so that they formed a better understanding of the courses being followed by students at the other level and the problems of transition faced by students as they moved from primary to secondary school. The Committee has also noted the recent publication of a research report that makes a valuable contribution to policy and practice in this field in Australia and it commends this report to the staff of primary and secondary schools who are concerned about this question.[21] However, it would appear to the Committee that in South Australian schools at this time the problems that might formerly have existed in this area have been reduced by the planning of effective programs by both primary and secondary schools.

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[19] New South Wales, Parliament. Report from the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly upon the School Certificate. Part I. Sydney: Government Printer, New South Wales, 1981.

[20] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.10-11.

## Technology and the Secondary School Curriculum

7.35 The Committee has commented in Chapters 5 and 6 of this report on certain aspects of the impact of technology on the curriculum of schools and has advocated that instruction in keyboard skills and in the use of calculators should be given at the primary school level. Opportunities should also be provided at the secondary school stage to maintain and develop skills in these two areas. At the secondary school level the Committee envisages that computers could be introduced into the school program in two ways. First, computer awareness courses of limited duration, perhaps of three periods a week for a term, could be provided for students as an elective subject in Years 9 and 10. Excellent courses of this kind have been developed by the Angle Park Computing Centre in South Australia and are being introduced into schools. Secondly, schools could make computing experiences available as an extra-curricular recreational activity for students who are interested in this field. Recreational computing should not be taken to imply merely the endless playing of computer games, although such activities have their place, but rather the systematic use of a micro-computer, the provision of exercises in computer programming, problem solving and simulation activities, and the opportunity to gain experience in the use of computers for a variety of purposes. Such activities can be both stimulating and satisfying and can serve to introduce secondary school students to an area that is intellectually demanding and is seen to be relevant to modern life.

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[21] Power, C. and Cotterell, J. Changes in Students in the Transition from Primary to Secondary School. ERDC Report No. 27. Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1981.

# CHAPTER 8

## THE CURRICULUM OF THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

### Holding Power and Age

8.1 In the first report of the Committee consideration was given to the problems confronting the upper secondary schools, not only in Australia, but also in other parts of the Western World.[1] In addition, the gradual reform of the examining system at the Year 12 level was advocated.[2] The Committee is aware of some opposition to its proposals for change, which arise from those in the community who seek to maintain the academic standards of the high schools through an external examination, in the form of a matriculation examination under the control of the universities. The Committee does not deny the importance of maintaining high standards of scholarship among the more able students, who in the interests of national development as well as for their own personal fulfilment should be encouraged to undertake an academically oriented program at the Year 11 and Year 12 levels and should continue with their studies at a university or a college of advanced education. Nevertheless, the Committee is also aware of the fact that there are increasing numbers of students who remain at school to the Year 12 level, partly because opportunities for employment are no longer available, and yet who find little reward in the study of a traditional academic program. The Committee believes that the schools have an obligation and a responsibility to serve these students and it rejects the view that the upper secondary school is concerned solely with catering for the needs of students who wish to undertake academic studies both at school and later in higher education. It is argued that a high level of general education over a twelve year period is a necessary basis for the development of a modern technological society.

8.2 The Committee has noted that students from South Australian schools complete their secondary schooling at Year 12 level at an average age of 17 years 6 months and are significantly younger, by 8 and 9 months on average, than their counterparts in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. However, it should also be noted that they are only marginally younger than students completing Year 12 in Queensland and Western Australia. Many on the staff of South Australian universities are critical of the relative

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1. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., Chapter 10.
2. ibid. Chapter 11.

immaturity of students enrolling for first year courses who come directly from studying at the Year 12 level during the previous year. They have some basis for their criticisms of immaturity, if comparisons are made with students of equivalent standing in the eastern States of Australia. However, raising the level of maturity of students and hopefully their level of performance as a consequence is not best achieved through an additional year of upper secondary schooling as some have advocated. The Committee has noted in Chapter 6 of this report that there is a tendency in South Australian schools to provide accelerated progress for many students through the junior primary grades. It has questioned the value of this practice, believing that it results in some students requiring remedial help during the primary school years, leads to a general drop in standard of performance throughout the primary and secondary school grades, and to a relatively lower age level on completion of secondary schooling than in the eastern States. Consequently the Committee has advocated that new policies be developed for the advancement of students through the junior primary and lower primary grades in order to lift gradually the average age of students in successive years of schooling. However, little useful purpose would be served if students in their progress through primary and secondary schooling merely took longer to cover the same syllabuses to the same levels of achievement as formerly. The additional months of schooling are only of consequence if, for all students, a higher standard of performance is achieved.

8.3 In the first report of the Committee an examination was undertaken of changes in the retention rates for students in South Australia over the decade from 1970 to 1980.[3] The Committee was puzzled by the apparent rises that had occurred in retention rates at Years 11 and 12 in 1980, based on evidence that became available as the report was in its final stages of preparation. This lately received evidence led to some minor inconsistencies in the text. However, the Committee has since had time to examine the consequences of a shift in the date of the Annual Census of schools from 1 August to 1 July, and to estimate the effects of this change on the retention rates. In general terms, at both the Year 11 and Year 12 levels in the government schools, the change of date resulted in an over estimation of retention rates at the Year 12 level of one percentage point, and at the Year 11 level of two percentage points. Thus there would appear to be little firm evidence of a sizeable increase in the holding power of the schools in South Australia in 1980, a view that is confirmed by no change in holding power at Year 12 in

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[3] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.3-9.

Table 8.1 Enrolment Rates for Students in Full-time Education Aged 16-18 Years and in Higher Education, 1976

| Enrolment Rates of Persons Aged 16-18 Years | | Enrolment Rates in Higher Education | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Country | Percentage | Country | Age Span | Percentage |
| United States | 75.7 | United States | 18-22 | 29.1 |
| Japan | 74.8 | Japan | 18-22 | 26.6 |
| Switzerland | 71.0 | Canada | 18-22 | 18.3 |
| Canada | 66.0 | Denmark | 20-24 | 13.2 |
| Norway | 64.1 | Greece (1972) | 18-22 | 12.1 |
| The Netherlands | 63.1 | Spain (1975) | 18-22 | 11.7 |
| Sweden | 56.8 | Germany | 20-24 | 11.6 |
| Denmark | 55.6 | Australia | 17-21 | 11.2 |
| France | 54.0 | Norway | 20-24 | 10.7 |
| Greece (1975) | 49.0 | Sweden (1975) | 20-24 | 10.3 |
| Ireland(1975) | 47.3 | Ireland(1975) | 18-22 | 9.9 |
| Italy (1975) | 43.7 | New Zealand | 18-22 | 9.6 |
| New Zealand | 40.4 | Austria | 19-23 | 8.6 |
| Australia | 40.2 | Switzerland | 20-24 | 8.5 |
| United Kingdom | 37.4 | [a]United Kingdom | 17-20 | 6.3 |
| Spain (1975) | 36.2 | Portugal(1975) | 19-23 | 4.8 |
| Fed. Rep. Germany | 35.2 | | | |
| Portugal (1975) | 33.2 | | | |
| Austria | 28.6 | | | |
| South Australia | 38.2 | South Australia | 17-21 | 10.7 |

Note: a Age range is one year shorter than the statistics for other countries.

Source: OECD, Education Statistics in OECD Countries, 1981[4].

the government schools for 1980 to 1981. It was noted in the first report of the Committee that the South Australian schools had a much higher level of retention at Year 11 than existed for Australian schools on average, but only a marginally higher level at Year 12. This is in spite of what has been noted above, namely, the relative youth of students in Years 11 and 12 in South Australian schools.

8.4 It is of some interest to consider the relative degree of participation of students in education in Australia and in other highly industrialized countries. In Table 8.1 information has been recorded on the enrolment rates of students in full-time education aged 16 to 18 years as a proportion of the population aged 16 to 18 years in 1976 for the major OECD countries. In addition, Table 8.1 also records the enrolment rates applicable for five-year age bands for

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[4] Quoted from Karmel, P. Education in the Eighties. Australian Education Review No. 15. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1981, pp. 8-9.

Table 8.2 Ratio of Male to Female Students in Major Courses in the Matriculation Examination in South Australia, Years 1977 to 1980

| Major Subjects with more than 1000 enrolments | Years | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1977 | 1978 | 1979 | 1980 |
| Art | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Australian History | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| Biology | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Chemistry | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| Classical Studies | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Economics | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| English | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Geography | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 1.0 |
| Geology | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| Mathematics 1 and 2 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Mathematics IS | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Modern European History | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.7 |
| Physics | 3.5 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3.0 |
| Year 12 Students | 0.97 | 0.92 | 0.94 | 0.97 |

Source: Public Examinations Board of South Australian records, and ABS. Schools Australian. Cat. No 4202.0.

students engaged in programs of higher education in the OECD countries. It should be noted that in Australia the participation rate for students in full-time education aged 16 to 18 years is relatively low when compared with such countries as the United States, Japan and Canada. While Australia is ranked higher in position with respect to enrolment rates in higher education, it should be noted that the data for Australia relates to ages 17 to 21 years, covers a lower age range than in other countries, and involves some bridging across to education in upper secondary schools. The participation rates for South Australia both for full-time students aged 16 to 18 years and for full-time students engaged in higher education are lower than the average for Australia. The lower participation rates are a consequence of the relatively young age at which students complete secondary schooling and proceed with further study at universities and colleges of advanced education.

## The Education of Girls At Years 11 and 12

8.5 The evidence presented by the Committee in its first report reveals the marked change that has taken place during the past decade in the participation of girls in schooling at Years 11 and 12.[5] Where formerly the proportion of boys greatly exceeded the proportion of girls remaining at school to the terminal stages, now the situation has been reversed and the proportion of girls exceeds by a significant margin the proportion of boys. In Table 8.2 information is presented on the ratios of male to female students in the major subject areas with more than 1000 candidates in matriculation examinations in years 1977 to 1980. This evidence confirms what is now widely known, that a marked sex bias has developed over the years of secondary schooling with respect to certain subjects in the school curriculum. Male students choose to study mathematics, physics and chemistry, and female students show a greater preference for the humanities and biology. The consequence of these choices is that the possibility of further study at the tertiary level in certain fields is greatly reduced for girls, because of subject choices made at the middle and upper secondary school stage. Since entry into certain careers requires the study of mathematics and the sciences at the tertiary level, it is clear that girls, by their subject choices at school, have reduced the likelihood of their entry into those careers for which the community offers greater financial rewards. It is evident, too, that the social and behavioural sciences are, in general, becoming increasingly mathematical, in spite of a strong thrust towards anthropological and ethnographic work in these fields. Consequently, it is clear that without competence in mathematics, opportunities for work in such fields are greatly reduced. The new technologies open up new avenues of training and new career opportunities in the foreseeable future. In general, entry into training in the fields involving both micro-electronic technology and information processing technology requires general competence in mathematics and, for some fields, competence in the physical sciences. These are fields that girls might wish to enter in the future, and indeed should be expected and encouraged to engage in. However, without studying mathematics at Year 12 level, it would seem that they have greatly reduced chances of embarking on careers in these expanding areas. The opportunities available to girls to enter careers in these fields must be recognized and appropriate counselling provided at the middle and upper secondary school level to encourage them to undertake courses of study that will enable them to fulfil their aspirations to enter the full range of prestigious occupations. A recommendation to implement this proposal is presented in Chapter 10.

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[5] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p. 3-9.

Table 8.3 Average Class Sizes in Selected Subjects in South Australian Government Schools at Year 12 in 1981

| Subject | Number of Classes | Number of Students | Average Class Size |
|---|---|---|---|
| Art/Design | 238 | 1636 | 6.9 |
| Languages | 159 | 1039 | 6.9 |
| Music | 105 | 419 | 4.0 |

## The Diversification of Programs at Years 11 and 12

8.6 The Committee has examined the range of subjects that were provided in 1979 in the Matriculation Examination. Of the 37 subjects offered, 16 were in the field of modern languages, many such languages attracting very few students, with the most popular being French and German which drew only 405 and 394 students respectively. Latin, a classical language, drew only 13 students from across the State. In addition, six different types of History were offered in the schools only two of which, Australian History and Modern World History attracted significant numbers of students. Other subjects provided at the Matriculation Examination level, which were taken by fewer than 1000 students, were Music (History and Literature) and Music (Theory and Practice). In Table 8.3 information is recorded for the average class sizes in selected subjects in government schools at Year 12 level in 1981. While there is some doubt about the accuracy of the statistics for Art/Design, because sometimes more than one teacher is involved and hence the number of classes exceeds the number of schools, the result is consistent with views expressed to the Committee. It is clear that the Matriculation Examination is cluttered up with a substantial number of subjects that are attracting relatively few students and that these subjects are drawing heavily on the resources of schools in order that provision is made for certain subjects which would appear to have academic standing in the eyes of the universities. If these subjects of lower demand were offered in only a handful of schools in the metropolitan area, and where feasible in fewer schools than at present in country areas, so that students wishing to pursue these subjects could enrol in one of the schools teaching the subject, significant savings in resources would occur. This matter is considered further in Chapter 16.

8.7 In 1980, of the high schools in South Australia, approximately three-quarters were offering an alternative program known as the Secondary School Certificate, and over 1100 students were taking that program in the government schools. Only five non-government schools offered this program in 1980, and approximately 100 students were taking courses under this program in these schools. While up to 46 subjects are listed as being available for study through the Secondary School Certificate program, many of these subjects have attracted few students in the past and some are currently not being taught in schools. In 1980, relatively few of the subjects offered revealed an orientation towards a changing world in which the new technology was of increasing importance or in which societal change was given recognition. Thus while there was a course in technical studies, it did not involve the study of new technologies. There were no courses in computing or computer science, no courses in electronics, no courses in legal studies, although one has since been introduced in 1981, and little emphasis on business studies and accountancy. These are all subjects that have a high degree of relevance in modern society, yet they have neither acceptance in the alternative programs for the Secondary School Certificate nor the academic respectability for inclusion in the Matriculation Examination program in South Australia. There was, however, a course in Home Economics, that attracted about 20 per cent of the students taking the Secondary School Certificate program, but information was not available on the number of boys taking the course. The majority of courses that were offered under the Secondary School Certificate program would seem to be courses related to the traditional academic subjects, but with reduced academic content. Such courses based on traditional academic subjects would appear to serve little useful purpose because they impose serious limits on career opportunities.

8.8 The general impression to be gained from an examination of both the Matriculation Examination courses and those of the Secondary School Certificate program indicates two shortcomings. First, the courses that are being offered and that diverge from the traditional academic program are attracting relatively few students. Secondly, little effort has been made within the high schools to develop new courses that have a high degree of relevance in the modern world and that might attract a substantial number of students. A situation has arisen in which the imaginative development of new courses that would attract students to remain at school is not being encouraged or fostered either by the Public Examinations Board or by the Curriculum Directorate of the Education Department, which conducts the Secondary School Certificate Program, or by the schools that have the freedom to develop their own courses. Furthermore, the Committee must express its concern about the failure of those in authority to recognize the urgent need for reform with respect to the Public Examinations Board.

### Constraints on New Courses

8.9 One of the major constraints that operates against the development of new courses is an apparent requirement that courses offered at Year 12 level

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are by custom of such size and length as to occupy approximately six periods per week for a whole year. The desirability of developing courses that occupy only a term, or perhaps a semester or half year, has been given little consideration except in a few isolated cases. As a consequence a heavy burden falls on members of the teaching staff who wish to develop and conduct such courses, and the students are not provided with choices that would enable them to select from a range of alternatives a course that would be of particular interest to them. There is, in addition, some expectation that schools should not be involved in the offering of courses that appear to have a vocational emphasis. Thus Computing, Computer Science and Technological Studies are perceived to have a vocational orientation which is taken by schools to imply that such courses should be conducted by colleges of technical and further education. However, courses of this kind, the Committee believes, could and should be offered by some high schools as part of an education of students in those developments that are likely to have a substantial impact on their lives. The third major constraint arises from the way in which decisions are made in the Education Department and within schools. Both the composition of the Curriculum Co-ordinating Committee of the Education Department and the Senior Master structure within schools lead to decisions being made by persons trained in and committed to the traditional disciplines. Thus small classes can exist in many schools for teaching of Art/Design, Modern Languages, Music and branches of History, because these are the interests and concerns of those who are primarily involved in decision making in schools. The development of new courses in Legal Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Accounting, Business Studies, Computing, Computer Science, Electronics and Technological Science is seen as using up the limited resources of the schools and a threat to subjects on the decline and facing problems of survival.

## Some Alternatives - Business Studies

8.10 In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of students seeking entry to business studies degree courses such as accountancy and business management, reflecting the increased demand by employers for graduates in these disciplines. The financial and information management functions are assuming increasing significance in businesses, particularly with advancing technology, and an increasing proportion of the workforce is likely to be engaged in these areas. It is surprising to the Committee that a commerce subject has not been provided by the Public Examinations Board at matriculation level, when so many students are seeking preparation for related degree courses. Probably, as a result of this, many students leave school before matriculation to study part-time for a certificate in business studies at a college of technical and further education, and then seek entry to a related degree course. This is a very lengthy process for students wishing to pursue a degree qualification, and it is not the most efficient use of educational resources.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R8.1 commerce and business studies subjects should be provided at Year 12 level as tertiary entry subjects by the reconstituted Public Examinations Board of South Australia.

## New Courses and New Technology

8.11 It is necessary to give some indication of the type of course that we would propose could be developed initially for a shorter time allocation than six periods per week and for a shorter period than one year, perhaps for one term only, or for a semester to provide an introduction to the new technology.

Technological Studies. The course would view technology as a problem-solving process which operated within the resources and constraints of available knowledge and materials. The course would be built out of a series of units or modules concerned with such topics as: Energy Resources, Materials Technology, Information Processing, Technology and Society, Artificial Intelligence, The Micro-processor in Control, and Problem Solving. The modular approach would allow greater flexibility of operation.

Engineering Science. This course would view physical science concepts in relation to engineering problems and would emphasize design and optimization considerations. The course would aim to give students an appreciation of the scope and methods of modern engineering. Again a modular approach would be used to allow maximum flexibility in operation. The units would cover such topics as: Electricity, Man Made Structures, Electronics, Telecommunications, Use of New Materials, Aeronautics and Space Exploration.

Modern Industry. This course would aim to develop an awareness of modern industry and its contribution to social, economic and cultural life. The materials would be developed in modular form. The units could include such topics as: Work and Conditions of Employment, Trade Unions and Management, Trade and Tariff, Automation in Industry, Information Technology, Business Decision Making, Regulated Societies, and Internationalism.

Computing. This course would be designed to develop an awareness of computers and their contribution to a modern technological society. The topics presented in such a course would include: the components of a computing system, using a computer, computer languages, the microprocessor, computers in action in the home, the office and the factory, and computer abuse. The course would emphasize the rapid changes that are occurring in this field and the increasing range of uses being found.

Computer Science. This course would introduce a student to the field of computer science and would prepare the student for further study in this area. The course would include such topics as: the history of computing, data representation, computer hardware, programming techniques, computer languages, and the social aspects of computing. The course would require access to substantial computing facilities.

The proposals above provide some indication of the types of courses that might be developed in the one general field of new technologies that could be of interest to schools. It would, however, be important to recognize that, while materials associated with some of these courses could be obtained from the United Kingdom and the United States, the rate of development in several of the fields is sufficiently rapid to require that the courses must remain flexible. The enthusiastic teacher in these areas should have the opportunity to emphasize the rapidity of change. These are areas were schools and colleges could co-operate to allow access by students from Years 11 and 12 to the technology and expertise possessed by the colleges of technical and further education.

## New Topics in the Curriculum

8.12 Many courses offered in schools through the Public Examinations Board now have an optional component built into them. Through these options it becomes possible to introduce new topics into the curriculum. In this section we suggest topics and materials that could be introduced in order to keep the curriculum in different subject areas abreast of developments that are occurring in modern society.

Computers in the Curriculum. The computer is clearly playing an increasing role in modern society. Consequently it is important in some upper secondary school courses not to teach about computers, nor to teach some of the skills that are required to use computers in a sophisticated manner, but rather to provide opportunities to use computers as part of regular classroom learning in a subject. There is now available, commercially, a range of materials that integrate into courses at the Year 11 and Year 12 levels exercises involving the use of computers for simulation and other types of instructional purposes. The associated computer programs are written in BASIC and materials are available in such subject areas as Biology, Physics, Economics, Chemistry and Geography. The aim of these materials is to provide new opportunities for learning through the use of computers.

Statistics in the Curriculum. In the past there has been a tendency for the teaching and the use of statistical concepts to remain as part of the Mathematics curriculum and thus to prevent the view being developed that statistical principles permeate thinking about problems in many fields of learning. Consequently, it is desirable for exercises and investigations to be developed that involve the use of statistical concepts and principles in such fields as Biology, Physics, Economics, Chemistry, Geography, Social Science, and Linguistic and Literary Styles. The tedium that formerly existed in the use of statistical methods has largely been eliminated by the ready availability of hand calculators that will enable all necessary computations to be carried out quickly and accurately. It is important that statistical ideas should be seen as a thread running through many subjects in the traditional curriculum and that students should be encouraged to think in statistical ways about problems met in daily life.

## Staffing Requirements and Curricular Offerings

8.13 The Committee through its Resources Working Party has carried out a study into the staffing requirements of schools in relation to the size of the school and the curricular offerings. It was recognized that many schools were conducting courses at the Year 11 and 12 levels with relatively small classes. This was being achieved in some cases by permitting classes at the lower secondary school level to increase in size, in order to have staff available to provide a diverse program at the upper secondary school level. However, schools were known to differ greatly in the extent to which they used such practices. This situation provided the Working Party with an opportunity to examine relationships between total school enrolments, class size and number of subjects offered. In order to detect relationships it was found necessary to group schools into four clusters; those that offered between 15 and 19 subjects; between 20 and 24 subjects; between 25 and 29 subjects; and greater than 30 subjects. Average class size was used as an indicator of the level of resources required in a school in order to provide the specified level of curriculum diversity. A small average class size indicated a high level of requirement of teachers and a heavy drain of the resources available to the school. This was in some cases obtained at the expense of the resources available for the lower secondary school level. The nature of the relationships obtained from the analyses of the data that were carried out have been presented graphically in Figure 8.1. The sloping lines correspond to each of the indicated ranges of subjects offered and depict the theoretical average group size per subject as a function of total Year 12 enrolment level, on the assumption that each student chooses five subjects from the range of subjects offered. The sloping lines thus correspond to the formula:

$$G = \frac{5\ E}{N}$$

where G = average size of the student group for a subject
E = total Year 12 enrolment
N = the number of subject options from which a student chooses five subjects.

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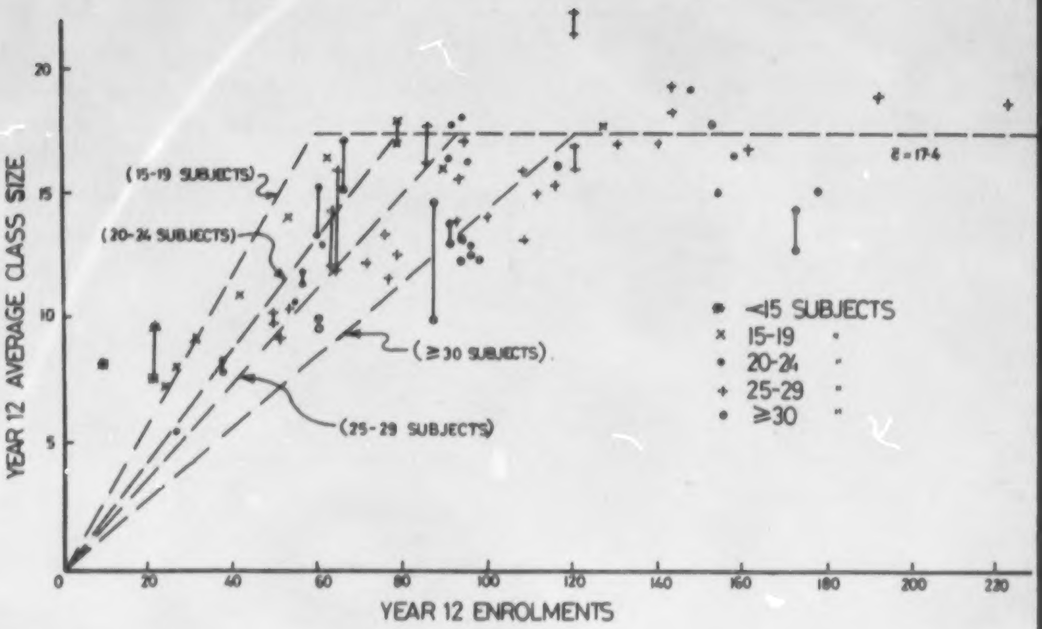

Figure 8.1 Relationships between Average Class Size and Year 12 Enrolments

For each sloping line the value of N has been taken as the mid-point of the range of subjects indicated with the exception of the situation where greater than 30 subjects have been offered, in which case N has been set at 35 to obtain the theoretical line. The sloping lines thus represent the maximum value of average class size that could be obtained if only one class were to be formed in each subject. In practice actual average class sizes tend to fall below this level as enrolments increase, since more than one class is formed for large groups taking a subject. The horizontal plateau line shown at an average class size of 17.4 corresponds to those schools having a relatively high Year 12 enrolment, assumed to be greater than 110 students in this analysis, and indicates the lower level of teaching resources per student that occurs for high enrolment levels. Vertical bars joining points plotted on the graph correspond to situations where Year 11 and Year 12 students in a school have formed combined classes in some subjects. The lower end of the vertical bar gives the average class size where Year 11 students have been excluded from calculations while the upper end corresponds to the inclusion of Year 11 students in calculations of average class size.

8.14 The top sloping line is associated with schools that offer between 15 and 19 subjects at the Year 12 level. It should be noted that as enrolments increase at the Year 12 level so too does the average class size. However, once a certain enrolment level is passed, the average class size reaches a plateau and no further increase occurs. The second line represents schools offering between 20 and 24 subjects. The third line represents schools with 25 to 29 subjects and the bottom line represents schools offering greater than 30 subjects at the Year 12 level. It is evident from the Figure 8.1 that for any given enrolment a school which teaches more subjects will of necessity show a smaller average class size, and, in general, will involve a high level of cost per pupil taught. It is also of some interest that about 50 per cent of the metropolitan high schools operate on those sections of the curves below the plateau. Thus their costs of establishing subjects are greater than those occurring in schools which are near the level of the plateau of an average class size of 17.4 students per class. In addition, it should be noted that schools which offer a greater number of subjects reach the plateau or the average class size level of 17.4 students per class at greater enrolment levels than do schools which offer fewer subjects.

8.15 The relationships presented graphically in Figure 8.1 have several implications for policies and practices in the management of schools at the Year 11 and 12 levels. Since many schools in the metropolitan area are situated on the sloping sections of the graphs, they are not well placed to sustain a diversity of courses at a time of enrolment decline. The present policy options available for management within schools unless they increase their holding power are to reduce the number of subjects offered, to allocate a greater proportion of teachers to Years 11 and 12 rather than to the junior years, to reduce the non-contact time of teachers, to combine Year 11 and 12 class groups, or to increase the time that students work on their own in private study. The Committee in its first report also recommended several options that could operate between schools some of which are already being practised. These options include the development of agreed and co-ordinated policies between schools within a region to specialise in certain subjects and to require students to transfer their enrolment from one school to another if they wished to study those subjects. Thus one school could specialize in modern languages, another in music and another in art. A second related approach is emerging in which one school in a region is concentrating on academic studies, another on vocational studies, and it would be possible for some schools to direct their efforts towards technological studies, or towards business studies depending upon the needs of the community which the school serves. There is, however, the danger that only those schools that offer academic studies will gain recognition in the eyes of the public and of the universities who attach a premium to academic learning. Moreover, since the government school system at the Year 11 and 12 levels, in particular, operates in competition with the non-government schools, there is a danger that the non-government schools will specialize in academic courses and achieve public recognition for their successes in the academic field. At the same time the government schools would be offering a diversity of programs to meet the broader needs of their students without recognition for the contribution being made to the general education of South Australian youth. The Committee has also recommended that consideration should be given to establishing on a trial basis a senior college that would draw students from the neighbouring high schools at Years 11 and 12 to establish a college of sufficient size to be able to offer a wide and diverse range of courses. Options of this nature have considerable merit and must be pursued if schools are not to absorb an excessive level of resources at the Year 12 level which would prevent other important developments taking place in education. It would appear to be necessary for Regional Directors to intervene in bringing about rationalization of curriculum offerings in schools under their jurisdiction, in order to meet more adequately the needs of significant numbers of students who are not continuing at school to the Year 12 level.

8.16 The major point that the Committee wishes to highlight is that while the schools in South Australia currently hold approximately 75 per cent of the Year 8 cohort of students at school to Year 11, only half this group continues from Year 11 to Year 12. Many of the youth presently leaving school at this stage face unemployment rather than continuing with their education at school. Colleges of technical and further education through increasing their range of programs are now making a greater contribution than they did formerly to the field of apprenticeship training through pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational courses. Nevertheless, it is necessary for high schools to make a more substantial contribution to the problems of youth unemployment through providing more relevant and diversified programs. Where practicable this should be accomplished on a joint and co-operative basis between high schools and technical colleges. In recent months some attempts have been made to achieve these ends through the establishment of special purpose high schools.

## The Vocational High Schools

8.17 The Education Department has received grants for 1982 to establish five high schools in the metropolitan area and high schools in Mount Gambier and Whyalla that will have a vocational orientation in the programs that they offer. This policy is an extension of those advocated by the Committee in its first report of encouraging schools to specialize in certain curricular areas in agreement with a general principle of diversification of curricular

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offerings.[8] The Committee supports such a development but offers a warning against narrowing courses at the upper secondary school level to the precise requirements of particular employers, as seen at the present time, as this could unduly restrict the employment options available to students and their capacity to respond to change. Nevertheless, it is important that students be informed about the nature of work and be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards work. In addition, schools can provide pre-vocational or pre-employment experiences associated with an occupational field, as well as experiences associated with the development of practical skills, with the ability to solve practical problems, and with the capacity to diagnose faults in the operation of technical equipment. Schools can also provide familiarization and awareness courses that will make students sensitive to the developments that are likely to occur in commerce and industry in Australia in the foreseeable future as the result of technological change. It is important for many youth, and not necessarily the less able, that the schools provide practical experience both in a workshop and a laboratory, for girls as well as for boys, that will be an effective corrective for the excessively bookish nature of much of the education currently given in schools at this level. It is this latter task, in particular, that the vocational high schools must undertake.

### A Technological High School

8.18 The Committee considers that it would be of value for one school in the metropolitan area in the first instance, to be established as a technological high school in order to undertake developmental work in the provision of technological programs for schools. It is of course possible that the Vocational High Schools will be encouraged to develop in this way, and if this should be envisaged, the Committee would strongly support such developments. If, however, this is not what is proposed, then it would appear essential that a Technological High School should be set up and provided with sufficient facilities to enable it to operate as a centre for course development, not only for the students that it might attract, but also for students who might travel to and from the school for courses that required facilities which the neighbouring schools were unable to obtain. The types of courses that could be provided at the school would be similar to those outlined in paragraph 8.11. In addition, it could be of considerable value to develop a course in the area of Information Processing that made use of recent technological developments in this field. The Committee does not deny that similar courses might well be established in universities, colleges of advanced education and colleges of technical and further education and that a case might be argued by some that such courses in schools would be undesirable duplication. It is nevertheless necessary to emphasize that the upper secondary schools in Australia are currently not attracting students largely because of the excessively academic nature of their programs. Consequently schools have an obligation to attempt to develop more relevant and challenging courses that will meet the needs of youth. The proposal that the Committee is advancing concerning the establishment of a technological high school is one way of attempting to meet such needs. The Committee also believes that a technological high school could attract students who were gifted, enabling them to specialize in mathematics and science. This possibility is considered in Chapter 10.

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[8] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p. 16-13.

## The Problems of Modern Languages

8.19 One of the areas in the currently offered programs of high schools that is a cause for concern is associated with the teaching of modern languages. The Committee believes that the development of a facility to read and to speak modern languages other than English is going to be of increasing importance in the future. Yet the evidence before the Committee from enrolments in the modern languages indicates that attempts are being made to teach such a wide range of languages to so few students at the Year 12 level, that the class sizes are very small. The maintenance of these classes is sufficiently uneconomical to require that alternative strategies for teaching languages will need to be found. The Committee does not wish to be seen to be disparaging in any way the teaching of modern languages in the high schools, and it emphasizes the importance of such work. However, we suggest that consideration must be given to developing different approaches to meeting the needs of Australian society in this area from those currently operating in South Australian high schools. It has been suggested above that for the academic study of modern languages consideration should be given to the possibility of certain schools, centrally placed in the metropolitan area, concentrating on the teaching of modern languages at the Year 11 and 12 levels. However, this does not mean that the teaching of modern languages in all other high schools should wither and die as a more economic alternative is available. It is noted that such language courses have in recent years developed an ambivalence about their purposes and functions. For some, the emphasis is on language usage; for others it is on the culture of the people who speak the language. Each has its place, but the ambivalence that exists leads to an uncertainty in teaching that makes the subject unattractive to all except the few at the Year 11 and

12 levels. What is of considerable importance to Australian society in the future is that there should be a greater proportion of the population who have a facility in the reading and speaking of modern languages. Thus it is desirable that a much more flexible approach to language teaching should be taken at Years 11 and 12. Through building on basic language courses given during Years 8, 9 and 10 (see the discussion in Chapter 7) it should be possible to provide language maintenance courses for perhaps two periods a week, throughout the year, or alternatively for six periods a week for a term to sustain and develop a greater facility in the reading and speaking of a modern language. Thus if a subject of Modern Languages were to be included in the Year 12 public examinations, it could provide a translation paper in which students were required to select from 10 or more passages in different languages, the one or ones in the languages they had studied and to undertake the translation of these passages. In addition, the students would be required to take an oral examination to assess the facility they had developed in the spoken language. To provide such courses a teacher could work in several schools. Clearly such a modern language program would not meet the needs of preparation for further academic study in a subject at the tertiary level nor would it provide an opportunity to study the literature and culture of a nation. However, it would provide opportunities to promote the development of reading and speaking skills in modern languages. Moreover, it would allow the introduction of greater flexibility within the Year 11 and 12 courses and a greater opportunity for students to choose from among a range of subjects those that were of particular interest to them.

## Classical Studies

8.20 There is a danger that students at the Year 12 level should undertake the study of diverse subjects and fail to integrate the many different experiences that they have had both inside and outside the school into a coherent approach to life. One of the subjects that currently appears to be contributing towards this end in the present Year 12 program is the subject of Classical Studies. One of the most striking aspects of the different courses offered for the Matriculation Examination in South Australia is the high level of popularity of Classical Studies, attracting as it does approximately 16 per cent of the total candidature. It has a drawing power equivalent to that of Australian History and far in excess of such subjects as American History, Ancient History, or Modern World History. The apparent attraction of the course that is offered is that it provides a study of a society and its history, politics, philosophy, literature, art and drama that is rich and varied, not only because of the variety associated with the different areas of study but also because of the richness of thought of classical times. In addition, it would appear to provide an opportunity for students to reflect on present-day modern society in its richness and variety through comparisons with a society of the past that has left a well documented record of its life and culture. Such a course would we believe be a fitting way in which to complete the study of the socio-cultural mapping that we suggested in Chapter 7 should be developed in the secondary school. The Classical Studies course, as a part of the total curriculum of schools at Year 12, has much to offer that is not currently being provided elsewhere.

## Computing Studies

8.21 The Committee has been greatly impressed with the work that has been done at the Angle Park Computing Centre in the promotion of computing in South Australian schools over the past decade and since its establishment in 1968. However, the Committee notes that Computing Studies or Computing Science has not as yet gained acceptance at the Year 12 level, either in the Matriculation Examination courses or the Secondary School Certificate program. Furthermore, while a Computer Awareness course has been developed, it is a course primarily for use at Years 9 and 10. Moreover, vocationally oriented segments of courses in commerce and business studies are only now being introduced. The Committee believes, however, that the time has come for a significant change in the policy of the Education Department. Developments arising from the introduction of the micro-computer are now of such consequence that the maintenance of the computer as merely a general resource for the various aspects of the school curriculum and for administration is totally inadequate. Furthermore, to maintain the Angle Park Computing Centre as the sole focus for the co-ordination of educational computing in South Australian schools is to restrict growth and development in an important field at a time of rapid change. If the South Australian Education Department maintains its current policies in these areas over the next five years its students and its schools will be left behind by developments that are taking place in the wider community. Furthermore, the State in its program of development will have another generation of students ill-equipped for the work expected of them and ill-prepared to work with the new technology in the home, the office and in industry. The type of growth that the Committee would envisage taking place is for at least one school in each of the 10 educational regions of the State to become a centre specializing in computing in the region. However, these 10 schools, together with other schools that became interested in computing, should remain closely linked to the Angle Park Computing Centre which should develop more as a consulting group than as a provider of Central Processing resources. Thus at Mount Gambier and

Whyalla where resources have been committed for the development of vocational high schools it is desirable that computing studies should be introduced into one school in each city to promote work in the field of computing in the schools of the region. In this way,the 10 and more centres could assist with the development and dissemination of information on computing throughout the secondary schools in the State. The Committee recognizes that the area of computing, the availability of micro computers and their range of uses are in a state of flux. Furthermore, it is to be expected that since developments in this area are extremely rapid, the hardware purchased could have a limited life. Nevertheless, it is only through the gaining of experience at the present time that an awareness will be developed concerning possibilities for the future. It would be extremely unfortunate if computing in schools became a disjointed collection of activities. However, growth must take place more rapidly than is currently envisaged. In order for this growth to occur it is important that younger members of staff of the Education Department, who have a fuller awareness and understanding of the issues, should take a greater part in the making of decisions relating to this aspect of the curriculum. Furthermore, it is essential that additional resources should be made available for the necessary developments.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R8.2 (a) $500,000 should be made available each year for the next three years, with a projected extension for a further period of three years in order to promote the development of computer services primarily in secondary schools, including the purchase of appropriate hardware and software by at least one school in each of 10 regions;

(b) the Angle Park Computing Centre should be maintained and strengthened in its capacity to develop advisory services to schools throughout the State, including the non-government schools; and

(c) new proposals should be advanced for the use and co-ordination of computing services provided for schools including the expenditure of moneys to be made available for developmental purposes to prevent the establishment of a disjointed collection of activities arising in the field of computing in schools.

## New Career Opportunities for Girls

8.22 While events taking place in the earlier years of schooling undoubtedly influence decisions made by girls to choose to study certain subjects in the final two years within the upper secondary school, it is at Years 11 and 12 that certain critical career decisions are made. Consequently, all teachers working at this level must be encouraged to recognize that new career opportunities are being opened up with the introduction of new technologies, and while a sound knowledge of mathematics and the physical sciences is of value for entry into this field, not all aspects of this work require such a background knowledge. There is thus no reason why girls should not undertake the study of the technological subjects in the school curriculum at the Year 11 and 12 levels that we are proposing. Hopefully, after gaining experience in these subjects, girls will be encouraged to continue with their studies in these areas and consequently seek employment and careers in the related fields. However, it is important to recognize that the traditional fields of employment that require a background of study in mathematics and the physical sciences will remain, and could become of increasing importance. Therefore, it will be necessary for those responsible for advising students on the selection of subjects for study during their two final years at school to emphasize to both girls and boys the rewards that are available and the range of career openings that arise from the study of mathematics and the physical sciences.

## A Plea for Greater Flexibility

8.23 There is an urgent need for rationalization of programs available at Year 11 and Year 12 levels. This rationalization should provide greater flexibility so that students are able to choose subjects that are more relevant to their needs and interests, but without impairing their preparation for entry into tertiary education. The Public Examinations Board, as it presently operates, prevents the development of courses that would provide greater flexibility and prevents the introduction of new courses that have greater relevance and thus greater attraction for students during their two final years of schooling. It is essential that challenging courses should be available at the end of secondary schooling to extend the most able. However, it is also important that all engaged in the planning of programs at the terminal secondary school stage should recognize their obligation to provide courses that will attract students who are not currently attracted by the traditional academic subjects being offered. This can be achieved by the development of some courses that would require fewer periods per week and would run for shorter periods of time than is allowed at present, as well as by encouraging students to choose to study not only a number of specialist academic subjects, but also some subjects of a non-specialist nature. Unless the upper secondary school introduces radical reforms during the next decade it will fail in its responsibility to youth to equip them for a changing world and a society in which they will live.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R8.3 (a) the Education Department should develop proposals for the rationalization of existing courses in schools at the Year 11 and 12 levels, and for the reallocation of resources to the promotion of alternative programs that would be seen by students to be more relevant to their needs and interests; and

(b) the reconstituted Public Examinations Board should serve the needs of the whole of the Year 12 student group and not just the interests of those students who are preparing to enter institutions of higher education.

## CHAPTER 9

# THE FUTURE OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

### Some Organizational Matters

9.1 The Department of Technical and Further Education has the responsibility to provide in South Australia a basic vocational education both for those who are already in the workforce and for those who are committed to a particular vocation. In addition, it must provide retraining for those who change their employment as a consequence of technological and structural change; recurrent education for those who wish to increase their vocational skills; basic education for those adults who lack proficiency in the skills of literacy and numeracy; leisure education programs in areas associated with the development of skills; and education to prepare people for work, particularly women who wish to re-enter the workforce, as well as youth who have had no experience of work and seek to enter a variety of fields of employment. There is an extensive range of programs that must be offered by the colleges of technical and further education. However, while there will always be a need to extend and update the programs offered in ways consistent with the changing needs of society and the introduction of new technology, it will also be important to prevent the development of an upward creep in the type and level of qualification offered in an attempt to raise the apparent standing of a course or program. Thus any trend to change gradually the nature of the colleges of technical and further education to become academically rather than vocationally oriented institutions must be unequivocally rejected.

9.2 The recent report of the Tertiary Education Commission for the 1982-84 triennium, on the advice of the Technical and Further Education Council, has identified the two over-riding priorities for technical and further education during the coming decade:

> The first is to provide the knowledge, skills and educational environment which will best ensure a skilled, adaptable and well-informed workforce able not only to meet the complex demands of a changing society and workplace but also to realize the individual potential of its members in the face of those changes. The second and related priority is to prepare as many young people as need or seek assistance to make a smooth and rewarding transition from childhood and schooling to the challenges and opportunities of adult life. Central to the first priority and interest in the second is a recognition of the importance of recurrent education as the major educational instrument available to enable adults of all

> ages to pursue or adapt to changes in their personal and employment circumstances[1].

It is, however, important to recognize at a time when youth unemployment is a major societal problem, that the development of appropriate responses to this problem is not a task for the colleges of technical and further education alone, but is one to be shared with the schools, with service organizations, and in particular, with employers. The provision of vocational training, both as initial training and as recurrent training at successive stages in the life of an individual is primarily the responsibility of the colleges of technical and further education. Where once employers took the major role in vocational preparation through apprenticeship and other programs, this work and the related cost burden is increasingly being assigned to the education sector and, in particular, to the colleges of technical and further education. Formerly, the type of vocational skills required remained relatively static over time and employers could provide those skills for their trainees in an apprenticeship program. Today there is increased sophistication in the skills required, and as a consequence, colleges of technical and further education must take a greater part. Moreover, it is evident that unless the colleges perform this task the levels of competence and adaptability of the workforce are likely to fall below those levels needed to meet the complex demands of a changing society, as well as those required to enable individuals to find satisfying roles in a changing situation. Consequently, the question must be raised whether both industry and the individuals undergoing training should contribute more towards the costs of these services, particularly for training in advanced skills and for the retraining of the workforce.

9.3 The coming decade in South Australia is likely to be one of rapid and significant change. Change is likely to arise from several sources. First, if the State is fortunate and is able to attract new industry as is currently anticipated, there will be a need for training in new areas of skill as well as a demand for greater numbers of skilled workers in well established fields. However, greater change is likely to flow from the introduction of new technology during the decade on a wide scale into both commerce and industry, requiring skilled workers with new types of skill and rendering obsolete many currently trained skilled workers who will require retraining. The past decade has seen the establishment of the Department of Technical and Further Education as a separate entity and a considerable expansion in the colleges across the State which provide courses at this educational level. However, there have been some criticisms recently that the Department has focused its programs too much on the area of leisure education, as was consistent with an emphasis within the State on the improvement of the quality of life, at the expense of providing an adequate supply of skilled tradesmen to serve industry, particularly in the metal trades and electrical fields. For the future, the colleges of technical and further education and indeed the Department of Technical and Further Education will need to be rather more flexible and sensitive than they have been in the past to the needs of commerce and industry in the State, in order to respond more rapidly and with greater surety to the changes envisaged.

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[1] Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. Report for 1982-84 Triennium Volume 1 Part 4 Advice of Technical and Further Education Council. Canberra: AGPS, 1981. pp.13-14.

9.4 One of the ways in which more rapid responses to the needs of the State might be obtained is for a Technical and Further Education Advisory Committee to be set up to advise the Director-General of Technical and Further Education on future developments that should be undertaken within the Department and its colleges. This committee should not be a large one representing all the diverse interests concerned with technical and further education. On the contrary, it should be relatively small and should consist of people who have a soundly based knowledge of the areas of commercial and industrial development within the State. In addition, they should be able to predict the probable directions of technological development and the rate at which such developments are likely to occur, so that the Department and its colleges can be well prepared to meet the changes when they come. The effective operation of such a Committee has in the past, both in South Australia and in other parts of Australia, proved to be extremely difficult. Several general principles would appear to emerge. First, the Committee should be small and established on a trial basis for a period of three years. Secondly, the Chairman of the Committee should be a person of some standing in the community and should not, as a matter of principle, be the Director-General of Technical and Further Education. Thirdly, the Committee should be well serviced by a small secretariat, so that the issues presented for debate and discussion are the relevant policy questions for the future development of technical and further education in the State. Fourthly, persons serving on the Committee should be invited, not because of the interests that they might represent, but because of the quality of the contribution that they can make to debate on the issues raised both within and outside the Committee. Clearly the issues need to be argued in committee and occasionally both to the makers of decisions at the political level and to a wider public, if full community support is to be obtained for developments in technical and further education. Finally, if the Committee is not seen to be working effectively after a period of three years it should be abandoned forthwith.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.1 a Technical and Further Education Advisory Committee should be established for a trial period of three years as a relatively small group with a Chairman appointed from outside the Department of Technical and Further Education.

9.5 The Committee has noted in its visits to educational institutions around the State the effectiveness of ad hoc committees that have been established to plan programs of technical and further education in a region. Furthermore, it noted that such committees have been functioning without any formal recognition in the past from the Department of Further Education. Just as it is necessary to plan to respond to changing needs and circumstances at the State level as considered in the previous paragraph, so too in a region it will be increasingly necessary to plan more effectively the range of programs to be offered in the region in the field of technical and further education. The co-ordination of development at a regional level could take place in two ways. The first would be through the establishment of co-ordinating committees, which would have representation from the colleges in the region including both the Principal and a senior member of the councils of the colleges. The second would be through the combination of colleges into more effective administrative units. Some consideration has been given to the combining of colleges during the past year, but such amalgamations are commonly not acceptable to the staff and councils of the smaller colleges. Nevertheless, it is evident to the Committee that in some cases it might be beneficial to form larger administrative units so as to make greater use of the expertise of the staff across several small institutions. It would seem to the Committee that neither approach, of establishing a regional co-ordinating committee or an amalgamation of several colleges into a larger unit, is likely to be appropriate in all cases. There is, nevertheless, a need for greater co-ordination in planning, which could grow effectively from the regional level if appropriate structures were set up to meet the need. However, leadership must come from the Director General of Technical and Further Education and the Technical and Further Education Advisory Committee proposed above if a co-ordinated planning system is to be developed for the whole of the Department.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.2 the Department of Technical and Further Education should actively foster the establishment of co-ordinating mechanisms within regions either through the forming of co-ordinating committees between colleges or through the amalgamation of smaller colleges into a larger and more viable unit.

9.6 The Department of Technical and Further Education is noticeably circumscribed in its actions and forward planning by a number of State and Commonwealth bodies including the Industrial and Commercial Training Commission, the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia, the newly formed Office of the Ministry, the Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment at the State level, and the Technical and Further Education Council of the Tertiary Education Commission and the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs at the Commonwealth level. In addition, each of the colleges of the Department must interact with the communities in which they are set and seek to serve the needs of those communities. Furthermore, the Department must maintain close links with the Education Department of South Australia from which it was separated relatively recently following the publication of the Report of the Committee of Enquiry in South Australia in 1971. The forward planning of the Department must take into account the many different needs advanced by these bodies and attempt to provide through its programs of education and training to meet those needs. There is thus a major task to be carried out within the Department associated with the identification and analysis of needs within the State and the estimation of the number of trained and skilled persons who will be required to meet these needs. These are tasks that the Department is not well-equipped to undertake at the present time, partly as a consequence of the manner in which the Department has been built as a collection of largely autonomous colleges. It is clear to the Committee that the Department should examine thoroughly the structures that exist within it and should rebuild itself to meet better the tasks required of it.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.3 a Working Party should be established by the Minister of Education to consider the tasks required of the Department, its multiplicity of links with State and Commonwealth bodies, and how the Department might function more effectively.

## Planning for the Future

9.7 The Committee has given thought to some of these issues and it sees that the central task of the Department is to provide the necessary number of trained and skilled workers both to meet the needs of commerce and industry in the State, and to satisfy the aspirations of those who would wish to undertake training. The Department thus has, as a result of an analysis of needs, the opportunity to establish in quantifiable terms the number of persons it must train and the length of training it is required to provide in key vocational areas. This information must provide the foundations of all its planning.

9.8 As a consequence of the impact of changes in technology the Department in the development of its training programs will need to take into account the effects of technological change on the skills required in the workforce. The skills needed and the types of experiences desirable to develop those skills will differ in each of the key areas, and there is thus an important planning task to build courses that will meet the changing requirements of commerce and industry within the State. The Committte will consider certain aspects of this work later in this chapter. However, it is important for the Department that the changes occurring in one college as a result of curriculum planning and development are transferred to other colleges conducting similar courses. This requires the building of a network of links across the many colleges within the Department.

9.9 The Committee views the Department of Technical and Further Education as a matrix of program areas operating across the 28 colleges and the 500 annexes and branch locations. For simplicity it would seem essential to limit as far as is possible the number of program areas and the Committee would envisage no more than 14 such program areas consisting of: building; business studies; electrical and electronic engineering; health, care and paramedical studies; hospitality; language and library studies; mechanical engineering; music and the performing arts; printing and the visual and graphic arts; rural and horticultural studies; textiles; transport engineering; access and preparatory education; and enrichment and general interest education. Each of these areas is of sufficient magnitude to permit the appointment from the colleges of a Program Manager and from the central office of the Department of a Program Administrator. The Program Manager could be one of the Principals of a college or the Head of a Department within a major college who would undertake this work in addition to present administrative duties. The Program Manager would have responsibility, in conjunction with a Curriculum Committee, for establishing the number of persons to be trained in each area, and in addition, for determining appropriate courses of instruction and their duration to produce fully trained persons. The location of the courses in each program area would be determined by the Program Administrator drawn from the central office of the Department with responsibility to a Director of Program Management. The Program Administrator would also undertake the general administration of the program. Colleges would only be permitted to conduct a course in a specific program area if evidence could be produced that a course was viable in attracting a sufficient number of students to ensure that adequately sized class groups were available for the duration of the course. The identified colleges and lecturers with economically sized class groups would provide the input into the program and this input should be quantified in financial terms. The output of the program would be the number of trained persons arising from the program. While the enrichment and general interest programs do not lend themselves readily to this treatment, the access and preparatory education programs could employ this approach, provided that a certificate of competence was awarded from each course. The Department of Technical and Further Education has recently take initial steps in the development of a program approach by identifying the costs associated with particular program areas.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.4 (a) a program approach should be adopted for the administration and planning of courses in the Department of Technical and Further Education;

(b) a Program Manager should be appointed from within the colleges of the Department of Technical and Further Education, and a Program Administrator should be appointed from within the central office of the Department for each major program area; and

(c) statements of input and output from courses should be published annually to show both the numbers of trained persons being produced by each program, together with an assessment of the effectiveness of each program in meeting the State's needs.

9.10 The courses developed in certain areas where apprenticeship training is involved are necessarily authorized by the Industrial and Commercial Training Commission. All courses of duration of more than one year and leading to a certificate award are approved and accredited by the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia. Approval and accreditation of courses should provide portability from colleges of technical and further education to colleges of advanced education, and between the colleges of technical and further education in South Australia and those in other States. However, the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia proposes to delegate approval of courses in TAFE Streams 2 to 5 to the Director General of Further Education, retaining only courses in TAFE Stream 1 for approval by itself. These policies may not ensure full portability of all approved courses which the Committee believes to be of some consequence as students are increasingly likely to move from one State to another.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.5 the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia should develop procedures to ensure that all courses approved and accredited under its authority should be portable between levels of education in South Australia and between institutions of technical and further education across Australia.

9.11 The Committee of Enquiry expected an overall statement of policy from the Department of Technical and Further Education that was related to the needs of the State for its future development and that would indicate how the Department was able to organize itself to meet those needs. While the Committee was provided with a considerable number of submissions and occasional papers that it found of interest, it was unable to obtain a coherent statement of the policies and plans of the Department. It would appear to the members of the Committee that such a plan should be available for each triennium.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.6 a detailed plan should be prepared by the Department of Technical and Further Education showing the proposed output of the Department in relation to the estimated needs of the State, together with supporting statements on the strategies being advanced to produce the specified output.

## Full-time Enrolments

9.12 In the first report of the Committee attention was drawn to the low proportion of full-time enrolments in technical and further education programs in South Australia as well as to the different levels of average annual teaching hours per enrolment in South Australia as compared with the rest of Australia.[2] The low proportion of full-time enrolments is of some concern to the Committee. While it does not underrate the importance of part-time study taken in conjunction with full-time employment, the Committee views participation in full-time education either at school or in tertiary education and more particularly in technical and further education as a highly effective form of training and a relevant and worthwhile contribution to the problems of youth unemployment. This matter will be considered in later paragraphs of this chapter. The different levels in South Australia of average annual teaching hours per enrolment could be associated with factors such as the size of class groups

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[2] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.9-2.

Table 9.1 Enrolments in TAFE Secretarial Studies Courses in South Australia and Australia in 1980.

| | South Australia | | Australia | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enrolment Category | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Full-time | 2 | 0 | 11956 | 100 |
| Part-time | 5193 | 9.8 | 53072 | 100 |
| External | 197 | 11.6 | 1700 | 100 |
| Total | 5392 | 8.1 | 66728 | 100 |

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission

in the colleges of technical and further education as well as the average length of courses in South Australia hence affecting the level of teaching effort required to service these courses. Unfortunately, while the collection of statistics for South Australian TAFE courses is generally highly satisfactory, a more detailed examination of this index of relative teaching effort has not been possible because of the differences from State to State of the concept of an enrolment. However, the Committee was led by these data to make some examinations of the teaching effort of staff in the Department of Further Education in comparison with that in other Australian States. This issue will be considered later in this chapter.

## Secretarial Studies

9.13 One field where there is likely to be very considerable change as a consequence of new technological developments is that of secretarial and business studies. The advent of micro-electronic technology will almost certainly change office procedures as new approaches to the storing and processing of information are introduced. Already the word-processor is having a substantial impact on secretarial work, but it is inevitable that there will be further changes in the procedures employed for dictation, viewing, typing and filing of documents. In addition, new procedures will be developed for calculating and processing statistical data and information associated with financial transactions that will require those currently engaged in office work to learn new skills. These changes will demand that persons preparing to undertake secretarial duties will need to master skills and techniques somewhat different from those involved in traditional typing and stenographic procedures. As a consequence the Committee would envisage that colleges of technical and further education will need to develop new approaches to the teaching of secretarial and business studies and will need to purchase equipment that uses the new micro-electronic technology and the new information processing technology that is becoming available.

9.14 The Committee sought information on the numbers of students enrolled full-time, part-time and in external courses in the field of secretarial studies in South Australia compared with Australia for the year, 1980. This information is recorded in Table 9.1. South Australia contains approximately nine per cent of the Australian population and a figure for the proportional enrolments in each category of TAFE courses might be expected to be of this magnitude. Although the Australian figures are greatly influenced by the provision that is made for courses in secretarial studies in certain States, it is evident that participation in full-time courses in secretarial studies in colleges of technical and further education is virtually non-existent in South Australia. Moreover, the high level of part-time enrolments is largely a consequence of substantial numbers attending short introductory or preparatory courses. A more detailed picture of the relative significance of part-time effort in this and other areas will be available in 1982 when the results of a new statistical collection have been processed.

9.15 The Committee in the course of its investigation was surprised to learn that, as a consequence of an informal agreement made many years ago, the colleges of technical and further education in the Adelaide city area do not offer full-time courses in the field of secretarial studies. Such courses are provided by private secretarial colleges. These private colleges attract, in the main, young girls who enter them for full-time training shortly after leaving school for which purpose these private colleges receive sizeable grants from the Commonwealth Government on a per capita basis. However, students enrolling in these courses also pay substantial fees. In other parts of Australia, the colleges of technical and further education operate in competition with the private secretarial and business colleges in the provision of full-time courses in a similar way to the competition that exists between the government and non-government schools. However, in South Australia students living or wishing to study in the Adelaide city area, or who wish to study in full-time courses, in general, have little choice but to pay fees to a private college. These policies are a clear form of discrimination against persons who wish to enrol in such courses. It should be noted that such forms of discrimination do not apply elsewhere in the tertiary education sector. In particular, the discrimination operates against girls who come, in general, the Committee believes from lower middle and working class backgrounds. Moreover, it is precisely this group who would appear to be suffering most from the high levels of youth unemployment in South Australia. The Committee does not wish to detract from the sound work that has been done by the private secretarial and business colleges over a long period of time and that is being performed at the present. However, it must express its concern that such policies have been permitted to continue without comment. The problems that exist should, the Committee believes, be rectified by the development of programs within the colleges of the Department of Technical and Further Education that make use of the new micro-electronic technology and the information processing technology, and that such courses should operate in open competition with those conducted by the private secretarial colleges. However, it is important that registered private colleges should be given every opportunity to compete with the colleges of technical and further education on a fair competitive basis.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.7 (a) metropolitan colleges and, where there is sufficient demand, the non-metropolitan colleges of technical and further education should be required to establish programs in the area of secretarial and business studies that employ the new micro-electronic technology and the information processing technology; and

(b) the programs established should include both full-time and part-time courses.

In time the Committee would envisage that such courses would make a significant contribution to the training of young girls in the use of new office and information processing equipment and for employment in commerce and industry where, in the future, this equipment will be used.

## The Education of Youth

9.16 A major problem confronting educational administrators particularly in South Australia, where there is a high level of youth unemployment, is that concerned with young people who are unable to obtain suitable employment, yet have not chosen to undertake full-time study at either secondary school or in colleges of technical and further education. A major reason for the relatively low level of participation among youth in full-time education in Australia compared with other westernized countries is that such education as is provided is not seen to be relevant to their interests and needs. Thus for many the prospects of employment in a dead-end job, intermittent employment on different casual jobs, or long term unemployment on low level benefits is seen to be preferable to an educational program which provides little interest and fewer skills that would assist in obtaining full-time employment.

9.7 Central to this problem is the issue of the provision of an appropriate setting in which youth develop work skills that will assist them to find a meaningful place in the workforce, social skills that will enable them to move with confidence in an adult world, and intellectual skills that will permit them to return to education and training at a later stage in their lives, should they wish it. It is clear that for some youth, schools do not provide the courses or the climate necesssary for these things to take place. There are some who on transferring from schools to colleges of technical and further education find a more appropriate educational setting. However, the evidence from research indicates that such programs as apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational courses attract students from near the middle of the ability range rather than the less able students[3]. The Committee is concerned that while there has been an expansion of the pre-vocational and pre-apprenticeship programs, and while the colleges of technical and further education have in some areas sought to develop and promote link programs, there is still a lack of positive policies designed by the Commonwealth and State Governments collectively to provide for all youth a guarantee of full-time education, full-time employment, or part-time education and part-time employment. It is possible that the problems will ease during the coming decade in South Australia because the size of the relevant age cohort will fall significantly. However, it is also likely that the problem will be exacerbated as the new technology is introduced into commerce and industry when there will then be fewer opportunities for students who lack the skills and the experience to participate effectively in the workforce. However, it is important that the Department of Technical and Further Education should not allow this issue to divert its attention too far from its major area of responsibility, namely to provide an appropriately trained skilled workforce for the State. Nevertheless, the long term consequences of a substantial body of young people who enter into adult life without the experiences provided by work or by education are becoming apparent overseas.

## Relations with Other Educational Areas

9.18 The Committee in its visits to educational institutions found in certain cases a very healthy interchange between colleges of technical and further education and other educational institutions. For example, it noted that courses were being taught under contract by a college for several colleges of advanced education as was considered appropriate. Furthermore, it found that one college was embarking on a course in computing to fulfil a recognized need in the area with access to the facilities, through a telephone link-up,

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3. Ainley, J.G. and Fordham, A.M. Between School and Adult Life. Hawthorn, Victoria ACER, 1979.

of a college of advanced education, that was willing to assist in the provision of appropriate courses. Close collaboration was also noted with secondary schools in the provision of Link Courses as has already been discussed. Sometimes fruitful relationships of this kind arise by chance, or as the result of the enterprising activities of certain individuals. However, in a number of areas of the State there is a virtual lack of joint working between schools and colleges, even to the point of duplication of some courses. There is a marked reluctance on the part of both the Education Department and the Department of Further Education to attempt to develop over time some more formal arrangements by which such collaborative programs might be fostered and allowed to grow. Unfortunately, there would appear to be a fear that one level of education might become subordinate to another, and its identity and purpose might gradually be lost. The distinctions between educational levels are too artificial and the resources available for education in the State are too limited, for such fears of subjugation to permit the thwarting attempts to share facilities and to co-ordinate efforts. Nevertheless, it is essential that if such collaboration is to occur and to be successful it has to be introduced gradually and carefully nurtured.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.8 colleges of technical and further education, particularly those in non-metropolitan regions, should seek actively to find ways in which collaboration with both colleges of advanced education and with schools might be fostered to provide a more effective range of services to both youth and adults in the region.

## The Costs of Technical and Further Education

9.19 The Australian nation has greatly increased its expenditure on education over the past decade and the criticisms that could be advanced in 1971 of inadequate provision for education in this country cannot be made today. The same comment applies in the State of South Australia. Nevertheless, many of the proposals advanced in the previous sections of this chapter clearly require re-allocation or further allocation of resources if they are to be implemented. The demands of the new technology, of secretarial studies and of vocationally oriented programs for youth are urgent and are likely to require considerable expenditure. In the main, this expenditure is associated with the provision of staff to implement the programs. Recognition of these problems led the Committee to request that a study be undertaken of the staffing policies of the Department of Further Education. The report that was prepared has raised a significant number of issues that are of great concern to the Committee.

Unless the Department achieves more effective use of its staff, its current policies and practices could give rise to a withdrawal of support for the work of the Department, at a time when support and resources are required to permit movement into areas where the need for development is pressing. Moreover, unless care is taken to reverse these criticisms, the costs of provision of educational services could rise to such an extent that the services provided by the Department would have to be curtailed to the detriment of the State as a whole and its future.

9.20 Technical and further education has over the past decade separated from primary and secondary education to form part of the field of tertiary education. Yet the staff in the colleges of technical and further education have sought to maintain the employment conditions associated with primary and secondary teaching, and have been reluctant to accept to the full the responsibilities and conditions of employment that would seem more appropriate for tertiary teaching. The issues raised in this section are not unique to South Australia, although there are some policies and practices that would seem to have developed in this State that are clearly more generous than in other parts of the country. However, there are also some policies and practices where lecturers in colleges of technical and further education in South Australia are less generously treated than elsewhere. In the limited space available certain issues are raised that will clearly need to be considered in an appropriate industrial court if they are to be satisfactorily resolved. The Committee recognizes that there will be little support from the lecturing staff of the colleges for any challenge to the conditions of employment which they currently enjoy. Nevertheless, the Committee sees no alternative but to raise the issues, urge that some rationalization occurs, and that the financial savings be redirected towards the urgent and necessary developments in the field of technical and further education.

### Some Critical Issues

9.21 In the course of its investigations the Resources Working Party and its staff identified a number of critical issues in the policies and practices of the Department of Further Education. These are considered below.

**Policies and Practices Relating to Teaching Effort.** The policies of the Department of Technical and Further Education governing the hours of duty are ambiguous and open to a variety of interpretations. Thus the regulation on hours of duty that was issued in 1971, prescribing that the period of duty should be 36 hours per week including meal breaks in duty time, related to the practice of supervising students during lunch breaks. More recent circulars have referred to 36 hours per week and 35 hours per week but have not specified whether meal breaks were or were not included. The specified hours of contact time for teaching is 24 hours per week, but this would appear to have been changed to 9,000 student contact hours per annum[4]. This would involve the teaching of class groups of slightly in excess of 10 students for 24 hours per week for 36 weeks in a year. However a survey of lecturing staff in colleges found an average of approximately 5,800 student contact hours per annum. This low figure is, in part, related to the high component of administrative duties performed by college lecturing staff, which are allocated to such staff to circumvent the ceilings in staff numbers for administrative staff prescribed by the Public Service Board. Thus lecturing staff on relatively high salaries are carrying out tasks that could be performed by staff at lower salary levels if such a re-allocation of duties had not taken place.

Recreation Leave. Under the Further Education Act the determination of the entitlement for recreational leave for lecturing staff resides with the Minister of Education. In 1976, the taking of 49 days of recreation leave was authorized and this leave could be taken by mutual arrangement within the college at any time during the year. It should be noted, however, that in other types of tertiary institutions the annual recreation leave entitlement is only 20 working days per year. The high level of entitlement for college lecturers would appear to be a consequence of practices established in the teaching service, by which teachers were absent from schools during the student vacation periods.

Evening Teaching. While there is a general regulation which states that no teacher will be expected to be on duty more than two evenings per week except in special circumstances, there is also a regulation that hours of duty performed after 5.00 p.m. may be counted on the basis of one hour of contact time being equivalent to 1.5 hours.

Under Utilization of Lecturers. In general, if members of the lecturing staff are under utilized within one institution they are not assigned lecturing duties in neighbouring institutions, and thus they are left with either a light teaching load, or assigned certain administrative duties. Such lecturing staff who are under utilized could be made available for work in other institutions.

Class Sizes. Clear policies have not been established relating to sizes of classes that could be applied objectively across colleges. Furthermore, while the student wastage rate in certain courses is known to be high, allowance is

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[4] This figure was provided to the staff of the Resources Working Party, but in recent months would appear to have been modified to 8,000 student contact hours per annum.

Table 9.2 Basic Conditions of Employment of TAFE Lecturers in South Australia Compared with the other Australian States in 1980

| | South Australia | Other States (range) |
|---|---|---|
| Duty Weeks per year | 42 | 40 - 42 |
| Teaching Weeks per year | 42[a] | 34 - 36 |
| Duty Hours per week | 35[b] | 30 - 35 |

Notes: [a] The number of teacning weeks per year is not prescribed but can be a maximum of 42 weeks per year.

[b] Prescribed hours are "approximately 35 hours/week".

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

rarely made for such wastage in setting the sizes of class groups at the beginning of a course, with the expectation that class sizes will fall significantly during the period in which the course is running. Guidelines suggested that no class should be commenced with less than 10 students enrolled at the commencement of the course, but it is clear that the numbers in classes could drop significantly below 10 during the course.

These critical issues in staffing conditions in the colleges of technical and further education warrant very careful examination prior to attempting to change conditions of employment for lecturing and other staff.

## Some Comparisons with Other States

9.22 It is difficult to make completely consistent comparisons with the conditions of employment of lecturers applying in other States, mainly because the reliability of the statistical systems is said to vary from State to State. Nevertheless, it is understood that the South Australian statistics presented here are reasonably accurate and that the average statistics for the other Australian States provide a broad indication of how South Australia compares with other TAFE systems. The statistics that are available indicate the need for reform, not only in South Australia, but in other parts of Australia in order to establish conditions of service for TAFE lecturing staff that are reasonable in the light of other public sector employment conditions. Table 9.2 records the basic conditions of employment of TAFE lecturers in South Australia and the range of conditions applicable in the other Australian States. It is apparent that conditions of employment in South Australia, in the broad terms indicated in Table 9.2, are generally comparable with those applying in other States. The South Australian figure for teaching weeks per year must be regarded with some caution in making comparisons, for this is not a prescribed level but a maximum level, based on the assumption that in the absence of prescription

Table 9.3 Distribution of Average Annual Duty Hours per Full-time TAFE Lecturer for South Australia and other Australian States in 1980

| | Annual Duty Hours | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | South Australia | | Other States | |
| | Number | % | Number | % |
| Teaching Contact | 483 | 34 | 571 | 46 |
| Teaching Preparation | 406 | 28 | 258 | 21 |
| Non-Teaching Duties | 540 | 38 | 405[a] | 33 |
| Total Duty Hours | 1429 | 100 | 1234[a] | 100 |

Note: [a] Incorporates an additional 180 hours estimated as a correction factor for four States which use a different basis for reporting non-teaching duties.

Source: Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

the number of teaching weeks per year could equate to the number of duty weeks per year.

9.23 The Committee believes that the evidence recorded in Table 9.2 reflects adversely on all Australian TAFE systems in the wider context of employment conditions in the public sector and the community generally. Admittedly the evidence suggests that South Australia is less deserving of criticism than some other States, but nevertheless all systems must be the subject of some concern. It seems to be an anachronism that TAFE lecturers enjoy 10-12 weeks annual leave and a 30-35 hour duty week (most State TAFE systems are closer to 30 hours per week) when the vast majority of the working community receives four weeks annual leave and is on duty for 37-40 hours per week. It is understood that, at least in South Australia, the period of annual leave is a carry-over from the period when TAFE was served from within the Education Department and school vacation conditions applied. It is strongly suggested that this rationale no longer applies and that annual leave entitlements should be reviewed. In this connection it is noted that the conditions of service for college of advanced education and university staff provide for four weeks annual leave. In justification of TAFE conditions it has been suggested that TAFE lecturers bear higher teaching loads than other lecturers in the tertiary sector, but we simply observe that, if this is the case, colleges of advanced education and universities might also warrant criticism in this regard.

9.24 A more detailed comparison with other States concerning the utilization of TAFE lecturing staff is provided in Table 9.3 which records the distribution of average annual duty hours per lecturer across broad types of duty performed. It is clear that the average total annual duty hours for South Australan TAFE lecturers are significantly greater than the average for the other State systems. However, as was pointed out earlier, it must be realized that the corresponding average weekly duty hours are 35 hours in South Australia and about 31 hours in other States, so that none of the systems have any grounds for complacency in the light of other public and private sector employment conditions. The rather remarkable feature about the South Australian distribution of duties is that, despite substantially longer total duty hours than is the case in other States, there are substantially less teaching contact hours with considerably greater effort apparently going towards teaching preparation and non-teaching duties than occurs in the other States. In essence, for each actual hour of teaching performed in South Australia, there are nearly two hours of ancillary preparation and non-teaching duties while the corresponding average for other States is only 1.2 hours of ancillary non-teaching effort for each hour of actual teaching performed. Clearly, all other things being equal, the cost of delivery of TAFE services and therefore manpower training costs in South Australia must be substantially higher than costs on average in other States. The higher cost factor in South Australia is compounded by the fact that the average TAFE lecturer salary in South Australia at some $18,300 per annum (June 1980) is some eight per cent higher than the average salary prevailing in other States (viz $17,000 per annum, June 1980).[5] It is believed that this higher average salary is in part due to a greater average length of service of staff in the South Australian system and in part due to more generous automatic salary advancement provisions.

9.25 The Committee believes, independently of the possible inaccuracy of interstate comparison statistics, that an inordinately high proportion of duty time is spent on non-teaching tasks and too little time on actual teaching contact. An average daily teaching contact time of a mere 2.3 hours across a lecturing force of some 1350 lecturers is clearly inadequate and leads to undue expense in the provision of technical and further education in South Australia. In its most recent report, the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission indicated that it would be unacceptable for States to service new Commonwealth funded TAFE capital facilities from within existing staff levels[6]. However, it is understood that the Commission did not intend

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5. Average salary levels derived from salary distribution data supplied by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Canberra.
6. Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. Report for 1982-84 Triennium Volume 2 Part 2 Advice of Councils. Canberra: The Commission, 1981. p.282.

Table 9.4 Ratios of Lecturers (F.T.E.) to Various Categories of Support Staff for South Australia and Other Australian States in 1980

| Category of Non-Teaching Support Staff | Ratio (Lecturers/Support Staff) | |
|---|---|---|
| | South Australia | Other States |
| College based staff | 1.99 | 1.95 |
| Central office staff | 8.7 | 7.2 |

Source: Technical and Further Education Council Reports.

to reject the possibility of increasing efficiency within existing colleges and using gains to assist in servicing new colleges.

9.26 In the course of considering the conditions of service the Committee was presented with a number of rather forcefully argued plausible explanations for the relatively low proportion of lecturer duty time devoted to teaching contact time in South Australia. In essence these suggested explanations revolved around the level of non-teaching support staff in colleges and in the head office and the greater amount of part-time instruction that occurred in South Australia and had to be administered by full-time lecturing staff. It was also suggested that a greater degree of college based curriculum development occurred in South Australia. However, careful examination of relevant data revealed that such explanations did not account adequately for the differences evident in interstate comparisons. In this connection it is interesting to examine statistics on ratios of lecturers to support staff in South Australia and in other State systems. These data are recorded in Table 9.4.

9.27 It can be seen that the level of college based support staff in South Australia is substantially the same as the average applying in other States. The level of central office staff is slightly less than occurs in other States. However, the assumption that this work is carried out at college level with a resultant reduction in the number of lecturers effectively available for contact teaching, results in a correction to average annual contact teaching time per lecturer to raise the average from 483 hours contact teaching per annum to 497 hours per annum. This corrected figure still falls significantly below the other States average of 571 hours contact per annum. The final factor which needs consideration is the greater incidence of part-time instruction in South Australia which requires co-ordination and supervision by lecturing staff.

If, for the sake of comparison, the teaching contact hours of part-time teaching staff are attributed to full-time staff then the effective annual contact teaching effort per full-time lecturer becomes 734 hours in South Australia and 854 hours as the average for the other Australian States, using the South Australian figure which includes the previous correction for slightly lower levels of central support staff. It can thus be seen that the factors that have been advanced as contributing to lower annual teaching contact hours per full-time lecturer in South Australia on a quantitative examination do not adequately account for the situation that has been reported.

9.28 It remains necessary to consider, then, what has given rise to the apparent anomalously low teaching contact effort in South Australia. There seems to be little option but to conclude that the situation has developed from a lack of clear policies on duty hours and contact teaching time in South Australia, such that the system has become relatively inefficient in delivering class teaching effort. Moreover, it is understood that college staffing decisions are frequently made without reference to factual data on existing lecturer loads and output in colleges.

9.29 In considering the question of how lecturer output might best be defined or regulated, two basic factors need consideration. First, as discussed above, there is the need to consider what constitutes a reasonable weekly level of teaching contact time. The appropriate level might well depend on the nature of the course being taught and more particularly the class sizes involved for, obviously, larger classes will entail more marking and preparation effort (i.e. non-teaching time) than smaller classes. The second key descriptor of lecturer output is thus related to average class size. The product of average class size and teaching contact hours yields student hours as a useful index of lecturer output. The Department of Further Education, as it then was, laid down a guideline figure of some 9000 students as the expected annual output per full-time lecturer. In practice, the average in the system is about 5800 student hours per lecturer, although the Committee is aware of at least one large college where an average of about 8000 student hours per lecturer is said to be achieved. In considering this means of defining a student hour index of lecturer output, the Committee believes that such an index if applied to individuals might involve unfairness and inequities in the incidence of teaching loads in certain circumstances. For example, there may be an obligation to conduct trade courses even if enrolments and class sizes are very low in some areas. To meet a target student hour output might thus require a lecturer to undertake unduly long teaching contact hours in a situation which is beyond college control. The Committee believes that the better approach is specifically to define minimum lecturer contact hours per week for the various lecturing staff classifications as well as defining minimum and maximum class sizes for appropriate categories of courses and then to consider the educational program and staffing of each college to define a student hour output that is the expected target output for the college. The college would then be free to organize its classes and teaching loads to achieve the target value with any short fall being regarded as the basis for management intervention or transfer of surplus staff capacity to other colleges operating at full or over full teaching capacity levels.

9.30 The Committee believes that the above method of staff management should be integrated into and form the focal point for Departmental planning, costing and management of the TAFE programs across the network of colleges. Under such a system, colleges would annually make a submission to the Department of Technical and Further Education setting out proposed educational programs with a list of courses and anticipated enrolments. The Department would then consider the aggregation of college plans against its plans for the State programs across the network of colleges, adjust the balance of programs between colleges where necessary and then, by resort to clear policies on class size and lecturer contact time, approve a staffing allocation to each college corresponding to an approved college educational program. Such an approach provides for both system and college management by objectives, allows accurate staff costing by program and allows performance to be measured against objectives. Each college submission could be prefaced by a short review of its previous performance measured against approved objectives and educational programs for the previous year. As a final step in the management process the Department would submit the aggregated educational plan for the State to the Minister of Education with estimated program and staff costs for approval before the consequential staffing allocations and transfers were made. Clearly some refinement to this broad scheme would be needed to accommodate matters like the part-time lecturing program and special projects that might be undertaken in colleges.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.9 (a) annual teaching output targets should be specified for each college in units of student hours on the basis of defined teaching contact hours per annum for each classification of full-time lecturer and defined class sizes for appropriate categories of courses as applied to the approved staffing and educational program of a college;

(b) colleges annually should make a submission to the Department of Technical and Further Education incorporating proposed educational programs for the ensuing year in terms of courses, anticipated enrolments and any special projects together with a review of performance against targets in the previous year; and

(c) the Department of Technical and Further Education should consider annual college program proposals and by suitable adjustment and aggregation prepare an annual state-wide program proposal, together with associated staffing and salary costs and a review of previous performance against approved state-wide programs and targets, for approval by the Minister of Education before the Department approves college programs and staffing allocation.

## The Adelaide and the Open TAFE Colleges

9.31 The Committee of Enquiry during its period of operation was asked to examine the possibility of combining the Correspondence School conducted by the Education Department and the Open College of Further Education conducted by the Department of Further Education. In addition the Committee was asked to consider the consolidation of these two institutions - individually or collectively - with those of the Adelaide College of Further Education and the Training and Development Branch of the Department of Further Education. The Committee received from the Department of Further Education two Occasional Papers directed towards issues associated with the development of new technology and its impact both on courses in the field of technical and further education and on the methods of instruction employed in technical and further education.[7] Both occasional papers are of considerable interest and of value. However, there is a marked difference between the ideas expressed in these papers and the practices reported from within the Department of Further Education in the areas of distance education through the Open College, inservice education through the Training and Development Branch and through the library information services offered by the Department. In part, there are too few resources being given to the introduction of new technology, where it might be expected that the colleges of technical and further education could give a lead. In part, there is an attitude abroad that dismisses the use of new technology for teaching purposes in disparaging terms with a slighting reference to "teaching machines", yet there is a whole range of new instructional materials being developed and used in other parts of the world. The use of videodiscs in conjunction with interactive terminals linked by telephone to a computer installation is but one example of new technology being applied in imaginative ways to advance teaching and learning in other parts of the world, at levels corresponding to those associated with technical and further education in South Australia. It must be anticipated that new technology will gradually transform much of distance education during the next two decades, and it is essential that such changes should not take place in isolation from the major centres for technical and further education in the State, particularly with respect to business studies, literacy programs, and bridging programs prior to undertaking further study. Thus the Committee saw marked gains to be made from an amalgamation of the Open College and the Adelaide College. The Open College would contribute new techniques of instruction, while the Adelaide College could contribute improved and up-to-date curricula in a partnership which would be of benefit to both institutions. It would also seem desirable to link together both the Open College and the Adelaide College with the Training and Development Branch as the latter operates largely in isolation, while conducting some ex-service courses in a similar way to the two colleges.

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[7] Swain, R. and Capper, J. The Effect of Technological Change on TAFE. Occasional Paper Number 4. Submission to the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia. Adelaide: Department of Further Education, 1980.
Brown, A.J. and Kenworthy, B. Applications of Educational Technology in TAFE. Occasional Paper Number 10. Submission to the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia. Adelaide: Department of Further Education, 1980.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R9.10 (a) the Open College of Further Education (including the Adult Literacy Unit) and the Adelaide College of Further Education should be amalgamated, together with the Training and Development Branch on a site within the City of Adelaide;

(b) resources should be made available to enable the new college to undertake developmental work in the application of new technology for instructional purposes for use both by the Open College and the Adelaide College;

(c) over the next decade the new college should become the centre for piloting the use of new technological developments for instructional purposes in technical and further education and that a small unit should be established for this purpose.

## The State and Commonwealth in TAFE

9.32 While the State has full responsibility for technical and further education, it receives substantial support from the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission through the Technical and Further Education Council for the establishment of new capital facilities and for the promotion of new teaching developments. The Technical and Further Education Council has also fostered the collection of appropriate statistics, programs of staff development, evaluation studies, a national TAFE clearing house and a national centre for research and development in TAFE. The Committee is aware that certain facilities have been developed within South Australia for technical and further education that are currently under-utilized because there are apparently not the resources available for the introduction of courses that would use more completely the facilities. Nevertheless, the Committee also sees that the State Government has, in the past, provided very generously for technical and further education within the State, and at the same time must face shortages of skilled tradesmen in areas that are critical for the commercial and industrial development of the State. It would appear that if technical and further education within South Australia is to benefit fully from the support and supplementary resources that the Commonwealth Government can provide, it must make more effective and efficient use of the recurrent resources provided by the State through improved management at all levels rather than solely through requests for additional funds from the State and Commonwealth Governments. The financial partnership between the Commonwealth and the State Governments is clearly under some strain as has been indicated in the recent report of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.[8] However, before the State provides further funding for the development and expansion that is seen to be necessary for the continued growth and welfare of the State, there must be clear evidence that a maximum level of efficiency is operating within the State's colleges of technical and further education and that the resources are being directed towards those areas where there is clearly a need for skilled tradesmen.

## Collaboration between the Two Departments

9.33 The Committee in its first report advocated the need for a considerable degree of rationalization in the use of resources between the Education Department and the Department of Further Education, and it proposed that the Regional Offices of the Education Department should serve a function of co-ordinating activities across the different sectors of education in the regions.[9] Furthermore, it recommended that Regional Councils should in the long term be established to foster this co-ordination on a regional basis. The Committee welcomed the establishment of a working party to investigate ways in which greater rationalization of resources between the sectors might take place. In the field of planning and research there is unnecessary

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8. See Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission: Report for 1982-84 Triennium Volume 2 Part 2 Advice of Councils. Canberra: AGPS, 1981.
9. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., pp.16-3 to 16-5, pp.16-14 to 16-15, and p.6-5

duplication of effort in the two Departments. There is also a lack of co-ordination in the management of property and probably in the use of computer services. Furthermore, it is both unsound and uneconomic for a duplication of effort to occur in the provision of vocationally oriented programs for youth in high schools when there are under-utilized facilities in colleges of technical and further education. This is not incompatible with the development of vocational high schools in a way that would permit the co-ordination and sharing of facilities and expertise between the two Departments to be optimized. The Committee recognizes that in certain regions some collaboration and co-operation is occurring between the schools and colleges of the two Departments, but, in general, it believes that there is a continuing lack of appreciation of the extent to which such sharing of facilities and resources might occur and of the need to develop structures that will promote such collaboration and co-operation in the future.

## CHAPTER 10

## THE EDUCATION OF SPECIAL GROUPS

### Introduction

10.1 There are several groups in Australian society containing members who are significantly disadvantaged. They include Aboriginals, women, the physically handicapped and ethnic people. These four groups are the particular concern of the Equal Opportunities Advisory Panel established by the South Australian Government. There are, however, other special groups for whom there must be concern regarding the education provided for them. These groups include the gifted, the mentally handicapped, those living in country areas and those living in inner city areas. Several of the groups listed above are catered for by special programs administered by the Commonwealth Schools Commission as well as by other Commonwealth Government agencies. Much has been written in recent years about the education of these groups within Australia and policies have been advanced and implemented for meeting the needs of many of these groups. As a consequence the Committee must consider what additional information has become available and what more it can add to both the debate and the educational programs provided for these special groups. In part, some of the problems associated with the existence of these groups are societal issues, that will not disappear without radical changes in social policies. Education can contribute to the amelioration of the problems of ethnic minorities, or those coming from deprived homes and living in disadvantaged areas, but it is important to acknowledge that education cannot solve many of the problems that exist. In the preparation of this chapter the Committee has chosen to comment and advance proposals where it believes that it can make a contribution. However, it must be recognized that many of the issues are too diffuse for effective solutions to be developed, and much is already being undertaken in most of the areas under consideration that is having a positive effect. In particular, the needs of ethnic students have recently been the subject of new initiatives of the Commonwealth Schools Commission, and as a consequence it would not seem necessary to give attention to their needs in this report.

### Aboriginals

10.2 The most striking feature associated with the provision of educational programs for Aboriginal students is that, in 1980, there were 3,535 students located in 344 government schools, and 137 students were to be found in 54 non-government schools.[1] Thus the provision of any specific program to help Aboriginal students faces the problem that they are widely dispersed in approximately half the schools of the State. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that their low level of school performance, which for those who attend school regularly is of the order of one standard deviation below that of other children in Australian schools. Expressed in another way it can be said that, in general terms, only the top 16 per cent of Aboriginal children perform as well as the average student at school in this country. This level of achievement is a consequence of many factors, absenteeism, health, educational turbulence, lack of motivation, lack of competitiveness, and specific disabilities such as those associated with poor hearing.

10.3 Four distinct groups of people can be identified, in general terms, for consideration of the situation of Aboriginal students. First, there are the city dwellers, who are growing in number as Aboriginal families move to live in city areas and their children enrol in city schools. Secondly, there are those Aboriginals who live in country towns or on the outskirts of country towns and in some cases on settlements adjacent to those towns, so that they have an identifiable membership of the towns and their schools. Thirdly, there are Aboriginal groups residing on stations or settlements who attend schools that are conducted on the stations or settlements where the children live. Finally, there are those Aboriginals who have chosen to follow a tribal life-style on the reserves in the northwest of the State.[2] Concern for the Aboriginals in South Australia is in the main for those of the Pitjantjatjara people who attend tribal Aboriginal schools in the northwest reserves. The problems associated with the education of these children have been considered by Dr. H.H. Penny for the Education Department of South Australia and he has made proposals for the Aboriginals gradually to assume greater teaching responsibilities in their own tribal schools.[3] There is little doubt that this report has influenced the policies of the Education Department and extensive resources are devoted to programs that are flexible and that give the Aboriginal people considerable say in the conduct of the schools that have been established.

10.4 One of the issues associated with the tribal schools and other schools for Aboriginal students is whether the Aboriginal people should be permitted

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1. See South Australia, Education Department, Directorate of Research and Planning. Aboriginal Enrolments in South Australian Schools. Paper No. 12, 1980.
2. These four groups were identified by W.E.H. Stanner. After the Dreaming. Boyer Lectures 1968. Sydney: A.B.C., 1969. p. 54.
3. Penny, H.H. The Training of Pitjantjatjara Aboriginals for Greater Responsibilities in South Australian Tribal Aboriginal Schools. Adelaide: Education Department, 1976.

to accept full responsibility for the conduct of the schools that their children attend. The Committee is of the view that under certain circumstances and at appropriate stages of development they might do so, and suggests that Direct Grant schools could be set up in those cases where the Aboriginal community wishes it. Further information about the establishment of schools of a Direct Grant type is given in Chapter 16 of this report. It is, however, important to recognize from the outset the dangers for both the Aboriginal people and wider society arising from the establishment of schools that segregate one group, even of their own volition, into schools or classrooms catering exclusively for that group. Consequently, it is necessary to urge that such Direct Grant schools should provide open access for students other than Aboriginals who might wish to attend. However, certain aspects of the administration and control of a Direct Grant school should be held by the group responsible for the establishment and conduct of the school.

10.5 Members of the Committee were fortunate to meet with many people concerned about and involved in Aboriginal education, and some members of the Committee were privileged to visit the Pitjantjatjara Lands Trust area in the northwest of South Australia. They noted the high cost of administration of programs in that area by both the Education Department and the Department of Further Education and the remoteness of major decision makers from the location of these services, particularly since much of the administration is undertaken from the central offices of these Departments in Adelaide. It would seem to the Committee to be more efficient for a sub-region to be established in the northwest of the State as a part of the Northern or Western Regions with a person appointed to accept oversight and responsibility for all educational services provided in the area, whether conducted by the Education Department or the Department of Technical and Further Education. Only through the carefully planned co-ordination of services and through a relatively senior appointment being made for a person to undertake significant decision making responsibilities, is it likely that the many problems that currently exist in educational provision in this area will be reduced and hopefully eliminated.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.1 (a) a sub-region of educational administration be established in the northwest of the State of South Australia, with an appointment made at the Principal Education Officer level of a person to co-ordinate the provision of all educational services to the Aboriginal people living in the area including those services provided by the Education Department, and the Department of Technical and Further Education;

(b) a Sub-Regional Education Council of the Aboriginal people of the area should be established to advise on the conduct and co-ordination of educational activities in the sub-region of the northwest of the State; and

(c) where possible the co-ordination should be undertaken of the educational programs of the South Australian Government and the Commonwealth Government in the northwest of the State and surrounding areas.

10.6 It is estimated that in South Australia approximately 10 per cent of Aboriginal students remain at school to the Year 12 level and approximately 35 per cent remain to Year 11. These figures compare with approximately 36 per cent at Year 12 and 77 per cent for Year 11 for all students in the State. Thus there are only 33 Aboriginal students currently undertaking their Year 12 studies at a standard that would permit them to continue their education in a post-secondary institution. A recent report by Dr. H.H. Penny has examined the many issues associated with the provision and training of teachers to work in Aboriginal schools.[4] This report is commended for reading by those responsible for both teacher education programs and the appointment of personnel. It was impressed on the members of the Committee who visited the tribal schools in the northwest of South Australia that the Aboriginal people wanted Aboriginal teachers from their own communities in their schools. Accordingly, the Committee proposes that consideration should be given to the setting up of more flexible training programs, conditions of appointment and of promotion to positions of responsibility in the educational services of the Education Department, and the Department of Technical and Further Education, so that far greater numbers of Aboriginals might be attracted to work in this field of teaching.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.2 more flexible training programs, conditions of appointment and of promotion to positions of responsibility in the teaching services of the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education should be established to enable Aboriginals to work in Aboriginal schools.

10.7 It is probably true to say that the need to consider problems associated with the provision of suitable programs for Aboriginals in the tribal Aboriginal

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4. Penny, H.H. The Training of Aboriginals for Teaching in the Aboriginal Schools of the Northern Territory. A report to the Northern Territory Department of Education, the National Aboriginal Education Committee and the Education Research and Development Committee. March 1980.

schools has served to withdraw attention from the needs of the substantial numbers of Aboriginal children who are widely scattered in other schools throughout the State and who have significant learning problems that are not being adequately met. Consequently, the Committee considers it important that special programs which provide positive discrimination in funding for Aboriginal education should be maintained by both State and Commonwealth Government instrumentalities. In the proposal for a "Prospective Review" of schools advanced in Chapter 13 of this report, one aspect of the education provided by a school, that should be taken into consideration in the granting of supplementary funding or additional staff to a school, is the nature and extent of the problems the school encounters with the education of Aboriginal students. In addition, it is desirable that those programs which have had a considerable effect in improving the educational prospects of Aboriginal students, such as the Commonwealth Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme and the State Primary Free Books and Materials Scheme, should be maintained at full strength.

Accordingly the Committee **RECOMMENDS** that:

R10.3 (a) allowance should be made in staffing formulae to provide increased staffing ratios for schools that have more than ten Aboriginal students; and

(b) current programs for Aboriginal students should be maintained at full strength and that changes in the balance of State and Commonwealth responsibility should not lead to a reduction in the financial resources available for such programs.

## Some Issues in the Education of Boys and Girls

10.8 Over the past decade much has been written about the fact that girls do not, in fact, have opportunities for education equal to those given to boys. However, it is also important to recognize that much has been done in recent years to redress this imbalance. As a consequence, as the Committee showed in its first report, there has been a marked increase in school retention rates for girls at the upper secondary school level, and the proportions of girls remaining at school at Years 10, 11 and 12 now exceed those for boys.[5] Furthermore the Committee reported the markedly increased involvement of women in the workforce since World War II both in terms of absolute numbers and in terms of the proportions of women aged 15 years and over. Nevertheless, the evidence showed little change in proportions in managerial occupations over the period from 1911 when the first Australia-wide census was conducted and a significant decline in the proportions in skilled occupations over that period.[6] Furthermore, a more detailed analysis of the proportions of women in certain professional and technical occupations over the census years reveals a marked fall in the relative participation by women in these occupations since 1911 and 1921 and a regaining of the lost ground in recent decades.[7]

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[5] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.3-9.

10.9 Evidence reported in Chapter 8 on sex differences in enrolments in the major subjects offered at the matriculation level in South Australia in 1980 shows that subject choice still strongly reflects a traditional sex role stereotyping. As a result girls are precluded from studying certain courses in higher education because of their low level of preparation in mathematics and the physical sciences. However, it must also be recognized that boys find it more difficult to enter certain institutions and courses within those institutions where selection operates because of their lower level of performance in languages and the humanities. Nevertheless, it is clear that one of the consequences of sex differences in achievement at school is that girls, in general, are less likely to embark upon careers or enter occupations that offer substantial reward than are boys. There is some debate as to whether these differences in achievement and thus of entry into certain occupations are the result of sex differences in ability and aptitude or whether the differences that arise have a significant attitudinal and aspirational component. It is the view of the Committee that many of the differences between the sexes in achievement have their origins in differing societal expectations for girls and boys, which are reflected in the attitudes of parents, teachers and the peer group towards the differing choices of certain subjects at school and differing expectations of success in those subjects by girls and boys. These differences result in different attitudes towards the study of certain subjects at school, different levels of achievement, and thus differences in access to certain courses in post-secondary education. It is of particular importance at the present time, when new careers and occupational opportunities are opening up in fields associated with the new technologies, that girls should be led into envisaging that they could achieve success through seeking training and employment in these fields. As a consequence, it is essential that parents and teachers and all who advise and counsel students should draw the attention of girls to the career opportunities available in scientific occupations, in the fields associated with the new technologies and in the skilled trades.

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[6] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.3-20.

[7] Keeves, J.P. and Read, A.D. Sex Differences in Participation in Scientific Occupations in Australia. 1974. p.33.

In addition, it is essential that girls should be encouraged to undertake the study at school and in post-secondary institutions of those courses that would prepare them for entry into such occupations. At the same time, it is also important that boys should be encouraged to develop their skills in the study of languages and the humanities and so increase the range of career opportunities available to them. Furthermore, boys should be encouraged to take courses that will enable them to play a more significant role in the home and family than they have done in the past.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.4 (a) girls should be encouraged by parents, teachers and career advisers to undertake the study of subjects at school, such as the physical sciences, mathematics and the new technologies that will increase the range of courses available to them at the post-secondary school level and thus to increase the employment and career opportunities which they might follow on completion of their initial education; and

(b) boys should not be discouraged from developing their skills in the learning of languages and the humanities that will serve to increase the range of career options available to them, particularly in the expanding areas of commerce, tourism and industry.

10.10 By increasing the range of options for study at the post-secondary school level, and thus in choice of occupation for both boys and girls through the reduction or removal of certain stereotyped male and female activities, it is to be hoped that a significant source of science and technical expertise will be tapped, which has not been utilized in the past. Thus the shortage of highly competent personnel within certain fields associated with science and technology could be reduced and at best eliminated. At the same time it is important that women and men come to be seen as individuals of equal status in society, with the right to fulfil as equal a role as possible in all aspects of home and working life.

## The Gifted

10.11 Increasing recognition is being given in Australia to issues relating to the education of gifted children. Certain areas of giftedness are readily accepted by educators, such as giftedness in music, singing, art and ballet. Other areas of giftedness are acknowledged and applauded by some sectors of society and these areas include tennis, swimming, cricket, athletics and gymnastics. However, many in Australia question the making of any provision in schools for the exceptionally able child, particularly the child who has marked skills in mathematics, languages and creative writing. Nevertheless, if Australia and, in particular, South Australia is to gain the fullest possible benefits from the exceptional intellectual abilities of some of its children, then it must permit and encourage those children to develop their talents. There is an ever present danger, with all children who are gifted, but particularly so for those children with marked intellectual gifts, that premature accelerated growth might result in the development of emotional and social problems for the child. Consequently, it is essential that children who are gifted intellectually should be provided with opportunities to develop their abilities with ample freedom to select those learning experiences of interest and challenge to them. Thus not only are these students' skills being developed, but they are being provided with opportunities for independent action, self-determination and creative learning experiences during their education. Thus in everything they do such children should be allowed to influence their own goals, and be guided to achieve those goals, but simultaneously led to become aware of their own limitations.

10.12 At the present time in South Australia, there are some programs that are catering for the needs of children who are intellectually gifted. Opportunities for accelerated development are provided through the programs of the Gifted and Talented Children's Association, through neighbourhood extension programs and through supplementary programs that some primary schools are able to provide. At the secondary school level several special interest high schools have been established to cater for talented children in the fields of music and languages. These institutions are operating successfully in South Australia, although there is always the risk that, for example, with special interest high schools in the field of music the other high schools might neglect music in their educational program believing it to be better provided by the specialist institutions. This danger should be countered wherever possible. In other parts of Australia some few selective high schools still operate and are permitted to remain because of the opportunities they provide for able students. More recently, in Victoria, a special program has been introduced at University High School, adjacent to the University of Melbourne, to provide accelerated individualized programs for exceptionally talented students.

10.13 In advocating proposals for South Australia, the Committee is aware of the difficulties encountered in the identification of talented children, and the problems arising from the fact that such children might be found in any school in the State. It would seem more appropriate if every teacher could be expected to develop teaching and learning strategies to foster the intellectual growth of gifted children that they will meet by chance in the classroom. In general, such children could not be redirected to a special school or to special programs, but their needs must be catered for daily. Thus at the primary school level, teachers must learn to identify bright and able children as well as children with special talents and must find ways of exciting and challenging such children in a range of fields from mathematics and languages, to art, music and drama. The Committee believes that it would be of value for every school not only to have a well stocked library, but also at a time of rapid technological change, to have perhaps a small micro-computer that a talented child might learn to use. Likewise, in high schools, it may be considered desirable in some schools where there is a wide range of abilities within the year level for the practice of setting to be introduced in the language subjects, both English and foreign languages, and in mathematics to permit the more able students to be given accelerated programs and for the very able to experience competition and the opportunity to be extended and fully challenged. At the upper secondary school level, in addition to the opportunities currently provided by the specialist music high schools and the language high schools, the Committee has proposed the establishment of a technological high school. It might be envisaged that such a school could well cater for exceptionally able students in the fields of mathematics, the physical sciences, electronics, and computing as well as other technological subjects. The technological high school could provide accelerated programs for the very gifted as well as appropriate extension activities in the fields of computing and technology.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.5 (a) every primary school should develop strategies for the identification of gifted and talented children and for the provision of a wide range of challenging activities including access to and use of a micro-computer, to extend such able students;

(b) every secondary school should where possible and appropriate provide for the setting of students in the subjects of English, foreign languages and mathematics so that students might be taught to their level of ability and the more able provided with extended and accelerated programs; and

(c) the current policies of providing special interest music high schools and language high schools should be extended to provide at the upper secondary school level a technological high school that would include the provision of courses for more able students in the fields of mathematics, the physical sciences, computing, electronics and other areas of technology.

## The Handicapped

10.14 The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Handicaps in South Australia has recently reported on issues related to both the physically and mentally handicapped.[8] As a consequence it is somewhat redundant for this present Committee to consider extensively the same issues. Nevertheless, the Committee wishes to address itself to some questions that it sees to be of concern. The Committee commmends the Education Department, the Department of Technical and Further Education and the Kindergarten Union of South Australia for the provisions that they have made to assist with the education of the handicapped child. In particular, the provision by the Education Department for physically handicapped students at the Regency Park School and at the Children's Hospital are of considerable interest and value. There is increasing acceptance that wherever possible the association of the handicapped with other children should be fostered. Policies of integration are strongly supported by the Committee. However, where schools are able to take significant numbers of handicapped students, it is important to recognize the increased needs of such schools for the staff and resources that would in the past have gone to those students in special schools. As facilities at the early childhood level and school levels become under-utilized there is much to be gained from relocating the special schools for the physically and mentally handicapped to enable their students to share the facilities of the ordinary school. However, it is important to recognize that staff working with handicapped children need special preparation and training. While integration is accepted policy in schools, the teachers required to teach handicapped children in their classes have not always received adequate preparation for the work they must undertake.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.6 (a) policies for the integration of handicapped children into normal schooling programs should be pursued wherever possible;

(b) practices of locating special schools for both physically and mentally handicapped children in multicampus schools or adjacent to normal schools should be maintained, and extended, particularly in situations where facilities in schools are under-utilized as a consequence of declining enrolments;

(c) teachers working with handicapped children in their classrooms should have, wherever possible, adequate professional preparation for such work; and

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[8] Committee on the Rights of Persons with Handicaps in South Australia (Chairman: C.H. Bright). The Law and Persons with Handicaps. Adelaide: South Australian Government Printer. Vol. 1, 1978; Vol. 2, 1981.

(d) support personnel working with handicapped children should be required to have training in meeting the needs of students with handicaps.

10.15 The Department of Technical and Further Education has a particular responsibility to make provision in its courses for physically and where possible mentally handicapped students. This may require the alteration of existing buildings to provide access facilities to enable handicapped adults to participate freely in such programs and in some cases the provision of special instructional facilities for physically handicapped students. However, in the new buildings being erected by the Department such facilities are now being provided.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R10.7 colleges of technical and further education should provide access and instructional facilities for physically handicapped students to enable them to participate as fully as possible in the programs of the colleges.

# CHAPTER 11

# STUDENT EVALUATION

## A Lack of Evaluation

11.1 The Committee views with concern that so little consideration has been given to issues of student evaluation by both the Education Department and the Department of Further Education. The policy statement Into the 80s Our Schools and their Purposes, for example, lists as a responsibility of teachers their obligation "to keep parents informed of the progress of their children" and to "use effective methods to monitor and attempt to improve the quality of their teaching", but little else is said about evaluation or the important function that it serves in the work of the schools[1]. In its first report the Committee said that education could be viewed at three different levels: the individual, the school and the system. Consequently, in the discussion of evaluation issues it is considered appropriate to examine them separately at these three levels. There is little doubt that attention has been given in recent years to certain aspects of the evaluation of schools, but largely in total isolation from the system of which they form part, or of the body of students that work within them. Only one document is available to assist teachers with assessment, namely: A Framework for Assessment in the Secondary School[2]. While this is a sound statement in many ways, it provides little of direct help to practising teachers.

11.2 The lack of interest in evaluation at all levels, the individual, the school and the system is surprising in view of the central role that student evaluation must play in the school curriculum, and that curriculum evaluation must play in curriculum planning and development and in the evaluation of the programs of schools. There is a widespread failure within the system to recognize that the three facets of the curriculum, the objectives, the learning experiences and evaluation of the learning that has occurred, must necessarily interact with each other. The essential purposes of the curricula of the schools and colleges are to provide for student learning. Consequently, the learning achieved and the progress made by each individual student is a necessary part of the work of schools. In addition, the Committee expresses concern that there is a lack of soundly based information available to students, their teachers, their parents and to administrators in the system,

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[1] South Australia, Education Department, Into the 80s, 1981, op. cit., p.38.

[2] Wilson, N. A Framework for Assessment in the Secondary School. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, (undated).

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as well as school councils, about the learning achieved by students in the schools.

11.3 Forty years ago the South Australian schools and their students were confronted with a multiplicity of external examinations. At the Year 7 level at the end of primary schooling the Qualifying Certificate Examination was held. In 1943, this external examination was replaced by a Progress Certificate Examination set within the school[3]. At the Year 10 level, the Intermediate Certificate Examination was conducted, and it was abandoned at the end of 1968[4]. At Years 11 and 12 respectively the Leaving Certificate Examination and the Leaving Honours (now the Matriculation) Examination were taken. The Leaving Certificate was abolished in 1974 following the publication of the report of the Karmel Committee[5]. These examinations formed targets for the teaching of the schools, and the student assessment that took place in schools was greatly influenced by the style and the content of these examinations. Furthermore, the schools were inspected regularly to ensure, amongst other things, that appropriate assessment programs were being carried out within the schools. Today only one of these examinations remains. Not only have the external standards that these examinations supplied been removed, but so too have the student assessment models that they provided. The Committee would not advocate a return to the past with the reintroduction of these examinations at the different levels as some have urged in their submissions to and their discussions with the Committee. Nevertheless, it has become apparent to the Committee that the useful functions of these examinations in setting up a framework for student assessment, as well as providing an evaluation of the practices of the schools were not recognized. As a consequence nothing has been introduced as a replacement and as an alternative and more appropriate basis for student and curriculum evaluation.

11.4 The Committee has been concerned as to why there has been so little emphasis on curriculum evaluation and student assessment in the recent curriculum documents issued by the Education Department and why an appropriate framework has not been developed to provide assistance to the schools in this aspect of their work. This clearly arises from a lack of awareness and interest in student assessment and its relation to the curriculum among those responsible for curriculum development. At least in part this serious shortcoming in the planning of school curricula and curriculum development must be related to a failure in leadership from the universities and colleges of advanced education in this area. This may perhaps be traceable to a strong scepticism of the testing movement, and in particular of mental testing, by certain individuals in influential positions. The consequences of these doubts have been that little or no emphasis was given to the matters of evaluation and student assessment over a long period in the courses provided in teacher education at the universities and colleges of advanced education. The Committee made enquiries from the staffs of the four present-day colleges providing teacher education programs and was surprised how little concrete evidence was forthcoming on either separate and specific courses concerned with evaluation and educational measurement or on significant evaluation components within courses relating to the curriculum of particular subject areas. Only in one of the four colleges were there courses provided of any substance. With little emphasis on this aspect of teaching and student learning over a long period, there has been no widespread recognition of the issues of student assessment or of their relationship to curriculum development. As a consequence, in the situation existing in South Australia where there has been a noticeable shift towards school based curriculum development, there has been little attention paid to these matters, by teachers or administrators. Furthermore, in providing advice to the schools, in a climate in which these matters are not seen to be of importance or relevance, the staff of the Curriculum Directorate have not chosen to place an emphasis on these aspects of student learning.

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[3] Education Inquiry Committee, 1949. op. cit., p.23.

[4] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971. op. cit., p.182.

[5] ibid. pp.526-530.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R11.1 (a) the universities and colleges of advanced education in South Australia should be asked jointly by the Education Department and the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia, to examine critically their courses of teacher education and to increase the emphasis given to evaluation and to educational measurement in teacher education programs through a systematic study of these areas; and

(b) in the restructured Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation a separate unit should be established for a trial period of five years to undertake programs associated with the evaluation of student performance as well as developmental work associated with the evaluation of school curricula.

## Some First Thoughts on Student Assessment

11.5 One of the most serious shortcomings arising from the framework for student assessment provided by the system of public examinations that operated formerly was the emphasis in assessment on the ranking of students in a clearly identified and consistent order relative to one another. While public examinations customarily grouped students into a restricted number of categories, it was recognized that the grouping was based on an order of merit associated with specific marks. One of the alternatives widely available and widely used in other parts of the world has been to develop standardized tests that are given to large samples, so that the average level of achievement of different age and grade groups on those tests is known. It is then possible to give a particular test to an individual student and to compare that student's performance with the different levels of performance of the relevant age or grade group. The information obtained in this way can be of considerable value, because it provides evidence of the student's achievements relative to a more widely based group than would be encountered in a single classroom or school.

11.6 Today there is a growing interest in an alternative approach to student assessment, in which an attempt is made to specify accurately the types of tasks that a student should be able to do, as a consequence of the learning experiences provided, and to specify the criteria for successful performance on those tasks. The assessment of student achievement is then undertaken by requiring the student to perform a particular task, or to undertake a specified number of tasks sampled from a set of similar tasks and to perform correctly a certain proportion, for example 80 per cent, of the given tasks. This approach to testing emphasizes not a student's level of performance relative to students of the same age or grade, but rather whether or not a student has achieved mastery of a specific task, or a specific skill that is being taught in the curriculum of the school. The emphasis on what a student can or cannot do with respect to specified tasks or to specified skills is generally considered to be more rewarding for the student, because information is received on what has been learnt. Moreover, the information is more useful to the teacher who is told in more specific terms what each student has achieved. A gradual shift towards providing this kind of information to students and teachers by the introduction of tests of this type should lead to more meaningful student learning.

11.7 While much of school learning necessarily involves a great deal of pencil and paper work, and while the skills of reading and writing will always be of the highest level of importance in our society, daily life is of a more practical nature and requires performance on a very large number of practical tasks. It would seem desirable that in teaching and in student assessment greater consideration should be given to the carrying out of tasks of a more practical kind such as those involved in speaking and listening, measuring and counting, and performing an experiment or observing a particular event. These are skills that must be learnt in the study of language, mathematics, science and social learning, and they are skills that are rarely taught and directly assessed. In order to assess the learning of such skills effectively it is necessary to specify appropriate tasks and the levels of performance required. An important contribution that the technical high schools used to make to schooling was the emphasis given to practical tasks of this kind, that were seen to be highly relevant to daily life for a significant proportion of their students.

11.8 The approaches to assessment outlined in the previous paragraphs and the evaluation of student performance on practical tasks are of particular relevance to the staffs of colleges of technical and further education. In the programs of these colleges there is clearly an emphasis on the performance of practical tasks as well as an understanding of underlying principles. Consequently, the assessment of student performance in the acquisition of practical skills needs to be re-examined and where possible improved to increase the consistency and meaningfulness of the assessments being made. There is, however, a tendency even when practical skills are being taught to rely on pencil and paper tests, because of the convenience with which they can be administered, rather than attempt to undertake assessment using practical tasks involving skills that must be mastered.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R11.2 (a) in the assessment of students in schools and colleges and at all grade levels, greater consideration should be given to the use of practical tasks for determining whether or not a student has mastered certain skills and learnt from the experiences provided; and

(b) in the assessment of student learning in schools and colleges, greater consideration should be given to whether or not a student has mastered specific skills through the use of procedures that involve the identification of the required tasks and the level of performance necessary, both in terms of the criteria of successful performance, and the proportion of tasks successfully performed to be considered appropriate for mastery.

11.9 One of the reasons why more use of practical tasks and skills has not been employed both in teaching and learning and in the assessment of student performance has been the apparently time consuming nature of such activities in the classroom. A considerable saving of time could occur, removing the need for separate assessment sessions, if greater use were made of check lists and observation schedules in the evaluation of student learning. Such instruments have been developed for use in junior primary schools, but little has been attempted in this country at the primary and secondary school levels using instruments of this kind. One of the benefits of a greater use of assessment procedure of an observational nature would be a decrease in the amount of time given to such relatively passive activities as copying dictated notes, or listening to a teacher talking, or listening while another student reads aloud. In addition this would, in turn, permit greater use being made of less obtrusive measures in the assessment of student learning, such as the number of occasions on which students borrowed books from a school library, or took initiative to find out something that they wished to know, or continued with a task over a period of days or weeks where it captured interest, or voluntarily and effectively helped their classmates, or needed to accept help from classmates to complete a task.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R11.3 a greater variety of evaluation procedures should be introduced into classroom use, including checklists and observation schedules in order to increase the range of skills being assessed and the learning experiences provided.

## Assessment in the Essential Skills

11.10 There are certain essential skills that a student needs to be able to perform in order, first, to take part effectively in classroom learning, and secondly to participate effectively as a member of society. These skills involve not only those of reading, writing and the use of simple relations of number and space, but might also include such skills as effective speaking, sustained listening, the use of reference sources, and those skills required for the solving of simple problems, and for the investigation of the physical world. Consequently the Committee considers it important that information should be made available to students and their parents at two occasions during the years of schooling on each student's level of mastery of skills of this type as are considered appropriate for the stage of schooling that the student has reached. The two stages of schooling that would appear most relevant are first at the middle primary school level, or Year 5, to assess primarily whether the student has mastered the basic skills necessary for further school learning. Secondly, there is the middle secondary stage, immediately prior to attaining the age at which compulsory schooling is no longer required, Year 9, to assess, in the main, whether the student has mastered the basic skills necessary for effective participation as a member of society. At the present time it is rare for information to be made available to students or their parents on the mastery of such skills. Furthermore, it is desirable that the information provided should be relatively objective and meaningful to both students and their parents about what is being learnt at school.

11.11 While schools have the delegated freedom and authority to determine their own curricula to meet the needs and circumstances of their students, it would be inconsistent to require all schools under compulsion to conduct a program of testing of all students at the Year 5 and Year 9 levels. However, the system should facilitate, as far as is possible, the participation of schools in such a testing program. It is also appropriate for the education system to draw attention to the importance of the skills considered above, and to the need for information on the mastery by students of these skills to be provided to students and their parents. If a school elects not to participate in the program of testing it should be able to demonstrate that it has introduced acceptable alternatives for evaluating achievement in these skill areas. Furthermore, we believe that parents have the right either collectively or individually to require that they should be provided with information by schools on the extent of mastery achieved by their children of these essential skills. This right would appear to be best exercised through School Councils, who would be involved in the making of a decision whether a particular school should or should not participate in such a testing program or adopt alternative methods of evaluation. Perhaps it is inappropriate for schools to be required to assess the performance of their students in all the areas of skill under consideration. However, for many schools there are benefits to be gained from undertaking testing in areas of skill beyond those of reading, writing and number work that are generally considered to be basic. Thus the Committee would envisage a battery of tests being made available to schools, that chose to participate, to enable them to undertake a program of testing at the closing stages of work in Years 5 and 9 in order to provide information to the school, School Council, students, and their parents on the extent of mastery achieved by the students of the skills listed above. It would be expected that, in order to make the results of testing more readily accessible to schools and teachers, the tests administered in the program would be scored by the teachers in each school. In addition, it would be profitable at both levels of testing to include some test items of such a nature that the actual carrying out of a practical task was required to show whether or not the student had mastered specific practical skills.

11.12 The results of student performance should be reported to both the students and their parents as soon as possible after the completion of testing. In addition, information on student performance at the Year 9 level should not be provided in such a form that it could be used in later years by students seeking employment. However, it may be appropriate that a student's level of performance should be taken into consideration by a school in making appropriate comments in the statement provided to a student on leaving school. From time to time it may be of profit to obtain information on the level of performance of students across the State on the mastery of these essential skills. However, it would not be necessary for every school to take part in a testing program in order to obtain sound information, since a sample of schools and of students within schools would suffice. The schools selected in the sample should submit a record to the nearest regional office of the performance of the students in the sample selected.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R11.4 (a) schools should be encouraged to conduct each year a testing program in the areas of the essential skills of literacy, numeracy, oracy, reference, problem solving and investigation at the Year 5 and Year 9 levels, and the decision as to whether a school should conduct a testing program or adopt alternative methods of evaluation should be taken by the School Council;

(b) appropriate tests should be made available to schools for this purpose, but that it should not be obligatory for a school to test in all essential skill areas;

(c) as soon as possible after testing, information on student performance should be made available to students and their parents, but not in a form that could be used in later years by employers, and the manner in which a school reports to its students and their parents should be determined by the School Council; and

(d) every four years data on a sample of students from a sample of schools should be obtained to provide evidence on the performance of students at Year 5 and Year 9 levels within the State.

## The School Leaver Statement

11.13 In recent years the Education Department has developed a School Leaver Statement that all students receive on leaving school. This statement has gained widespread acceptance in the schools, and is gaining increasing acceptance from employers. There are some employers, however, who would welcome a return to a more formal and objective examination at the Year 10 level. The statement is issued in two forms. Form O has been designed to provide a reasonably uniform document for most students leaving school, in the main, at Year 11, but students leaving at other times would obviously require it. The advantage of having such a statement for use across all schools is that it will have sufficient uniformity to be of use to employers. Form S, the alternative form, is a simpler statement and hence perhaps easier to interpret. It is short and requires less work from teachers and the school administration, and by including the student in the process of writing the report, it would seem to ensure greater fairness and congruence with the student's needs. However, Form S is not acceptable to many employers, because it is said to contain only vague and brief information. It would appear unlikely that the School Leaver Statement in its present form would be useful to tertiary institutions, except that Form O would be of some assistance in selection for apprenticeships or for placement in courses conducted by colleges of technical and further education.

11.14 The School Leaver Statement is largely inappropriate for students who remain at school to complete Year 12, and who study courses for the Matriculation Examination conducted by the Public Examinations Board. The Committee believes it is desirable that a common Year 12 certificate should be issued to all students who have completed the twelfth year of schooling irrespective of the specific type of course or combination of courses they have studied. Consequently, the Committee recommended in its first report that a Year 12 Certificate should be issued by the Public Examinations Board of South Australia to all students[6]. However, it notes a reluctance on the part of the Board to serve all students and to issue a common certificate. The Committee, nevertheless, does not change the views that it held or the recommendations that it made, although it left unresolved the relationships between the Year 12 Certificate that it recommended and the School Leaver Statement. The latter contains information in the form of a School Reference and a Statement of Activities and Responsibilities that is clearly of some value to the student, parents and employers. If the Year 12 Certificate should gain acceptance as documentary recognition for the student who completed schooling and graduated from high school, then it would clearly be necessary for an additional statement to be prepared to go with the Year 12 Certificate providing information associated with a School Reference and Statement of Activities and Responsibilities. The Committee is attracted to Form O of the School Leaver Statement, supports the work that has gone into the development of the statement and would not wish a reduction in its usefulness to occur. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that equal recognition should be given to all students who complete Year 12 irrespective of the type of program they have undertaken. For those students who complete Year 12 and who wish to proceed to further study at a university or college of advanced education, the Committee recommended that a Statement of Supplementary Information for Tertiary Entrance should be issued. The Committee notes that experience in the Australian Capital Territory has indicated that there is strong acceptance by employers of a statement equivalent to that provided through the proposed Year 12 Certificate, which is not rendered redundant and insignificant by the existence of Supplementary Information for Tertiary Entrance.

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[6] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.11-10.

## Some Other Assessment Issues

11.15 Diagnostic Assessment. There are three basic questions that teachers ask when undertaking diagnostic assessment. First, they ask of assessment whether the students in the class have, in general, achieved the intended learning objective. If less than an expected proportion have had success in learning, the fault lies in the teaching and the experiences provided for learning. Secondly, teachers ask which particular pupils have not succeeded in achieving the objectives and what are the reasons for their failing to learn. Thirdly, teachers ask what is the nature of the error made by a student, or what mislearning has occurred, and as a consequence what remedial action is required. In general, diagnostic test instruments focus on a single objective, or a narrow band of closely related objectives. The teacher's aim in undertaking diagnostic assessment is that, after the appropriate diagnosis is made, remedial action will occur to enable each individual student to achieve mastery of the intended objective. A diagnostic test needs to be constructed carefully to focus on the objective under review, so that success on certain items would indicate mastery to a specific stage, and failure on other items would indicate a recognizable deficiency in learning. Where an extended answer is required students commonly record the steps in their answering so that a diagnosis of errors can occur. Alternatively, an individual multiple choice item may be used for diagnostic purposes, and by the choice of particular distractors, the nature of the mislearning that has occurred would be revealed. Such diagnostic test items commonly have commentaries which explain the nature of the errors that have occurred, if particular distractors are chosen. While good teachers have in the past sought to diagnose faults in their teaching or deficiencies in student learning through their classroom assessment procedures, attempts are being made to try to improve the quality of diagnostic testing in order to identify more efficiently shortcomings in student learning. These attempts are consistent with a thrust towards learning for mastery and efficient remedial teaching. Diagnostic assessment is an area where there are highly specific strategies and tactics of evaluation needed. Consequently, if remedial teaching is to be carried out more successfully and if classroom learning is to be made more efficient, then every teacher will need to develop skills of diagnostic assessment. Clearly, developments in the area of diagnostic assessment need to be monitored by the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation and by the staffs of colleges of advanced education concerned with evaluation and assessment issues.

11.16 Item Banking. A development in the assessment of student performance that is likely to be of considerable significance over the coming decade, particularly so if the exploratory work being undertaken in several parts of the world is successful, is concerned with what are known as item banks[7]. Item banks are collections of test items that have been subjected to field trials and that have known characteristics. Such collections can be used for four purposes:

1. the monitoring of student achievement in a school system across time, in which appropriate items with known characteristics are drawn from the item bank for any particular testing program;
2. the moderation of internal assessment programs, so that an achievement test in a specific course can be equated with another test on a different course but in the same curriculum field; to achieve this the items for both tests would need to be drawn from a common bank of items each with known characteristics;
3. the sampling of test items in a particular area of the curriculum to determine whether effective learning has taken place, such use is commonly made both in classroom testing and curriculum evaluation; and
4. the development of diagnostic tests to identify specific shortcomings in student learning.

The preparation of good test items and hence of good tests is a very time consuming and costly business, and it is hoped that the widespread introduction of item banks will reduce substantially the labour involved in constructing a test. In the past one of the difficulties associated with the use of item banks has been the storage of items with known characteristics, in such a way that they can be conveniently drawn from the bank either by sampling or by purposeful selection. It is now likely that the advent of small computers will enable these problems to be solved and appropriate banks of test items can be made more readily accessible to schools. A second problem associated with the use of item banks has been to determine the appropriate statistical information to be stored on each item, that would allow the item to be used with flexibility across a range of different situations. Again promising developments are in progress, and again the ready availability of powerful but small computers to schools and colleges is likely to ensure that banks of items can be used in a variety of ways in the foreseeable future. Here then is a procedure that should be carefully monitored because it is likely to permit significant advances to be made in the fields of assessment and evaluation.

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[7] See for example, Dobby, J. and Duckworth, D. Objective Assessment by Means of Item Banking. Schools Council Examinations Bulletin 40. London: Evans/Methuen, 1979.

11.17 School systems both in Australia and other parts of the world are undertaking developmental programs in these two areas of diagnostic testing and item banking. However, in the Education Department of South Australia there is no interest being shown or expertise being developed in either of these areas. As a consequence it is likely that procedures and practices that should advance the quality of student assessment will be largely ignored by South Australian schools unless a more active approach is taken towards these aspects of student assessment and evaluation.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R11.5 the unit concerned with evaluation in the newly formed Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should be required to undertake developmental work in the areas of diagnostic testing and item banking and to disseminate information on both developments in these areas and the materials available to teachers and schools.

## CHAPTER 12

## THE EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS

### Introduction

12.1 The statement issued by the Director-General of Education to all schools in the Education Department of South Australia in August 1970[1] was a critical point in the transfer of authority from the system to the individual school and in the implementation of the view that the school and college were the basic units of operation within education. It must be noted that at that time the colleges of technical and further education were part of the Education Department, and it might be inferred that the autonomy transferred to schools was also given to the colleges. Thus the issues that are being raised in this chapter of the report apply not only to pre-schools and schools but also to the colleges of technical and further education and to all operating units within the educational system. Matters relating to the system as a whole will be considered in the next chapter.

12.2 The importance of the school as the operational unit in education was advanced and discussed by the Committee in its first report[2] and the Committee reiterates this emphasis here. Not only is the school the unit for all organizational matters, but it is also the unit for curriculum planning and implementation. Thus the problems likely to be encountered by a school will arise from three sources:

1. the nature of the community in which the school is located and from which it draws its students;
2. the nature of the curriculum that has been planned and implemented within the school to meet the needs of the students and the needs of the wider community in which the school is set; and
3. the organizational structures chosen by the school to meet the requirements of such factors as its size, its physical layout, its traditions, the degree of independent action it believes that it can allow its students, and the nature and type of staff it can attract to work in the school.

Each school is different, and each school must find solutions to its own problems in order to ensure that the school works effectively. Nevertheless, within any one educational system and, indeed, any one country, the schools within the system and within the country have a great deal more in common than is generally assumed. This only becomes apparent when the schools of one system or country are compared with those of another. As a consequence it is important to recognize that schools can benefit considerably from working in close collaboration, from a sharing of experiences, and from the co-ordination of their activities across a region or a system.

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[1] A.W. Jones, Director-General, Memorandum: To Principals of all Department Schools. Freedom and Authority in the Schools. August 1970.

[2] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., pp.4-6 to 4-8.

12.3 It has been a long standing tradition in Australia in the provision of education by State Governments that a high degree of equity should be preserved between schools serving different areas. Thus it is accepted that schools should be provided with similar facilities, with similar amounts of money for their recurrent expenditure, and are staffed, in general, according to the same staffing formula. However, it must also be acknowledged that the parents in some schools are better placed to provide supplementary funding to assist a school to acquire better facilities or to obtain a better range of educational materials than in others. Moreover, it must be recognized that some schools have greater needs because of the level of educational disadvantage that their students experience in the communities from which they come. The policies of the Commonwealth Schools Commission, which was established in 1973, have led to the provision of supplementary resources being provided for those schools with greater needs. However, it is necessary for an appropriate balance to be maintained between the competing needs of schools and thus to ensure that schools with influential parent bodies or school councils do not attract additional resources and acquire superior facilities because of a greater capacity to influence the allocation of staff and resources to their schools.

12.4 The delegation of greater freedom and authority to schools in South Australia over the past 10 years has permitted some schools to develop and to become better schools than they would have otherwise been, and some schools possibly to deteriorate. Where formerly there was an inspectorial service to check that standards were being maintained, to place certain pressures and constraints on schools and to ensure that, where necessary, standards were raised, it was clearly inconsistent with the Memorandum of August 1970 that such an inspectorial service should be continued. We do not doubt that, at the present time, there are certain people within the Education Department at the level of Principal Education Officer, Regional Director and in the central administration, who have a sound knowledge of the effectiveness of many schools within the State. However, they have obtained this information by chance, and they lack the capacity to use the information to remedy shortcomings within a school. What has clearly changed in recent years is the capacity of the administration to rectify deficiencies where they are seen to exist by the more formal and direct procedures that they could once have used. As a consequence new strategies have begun to emerge that permit schools to examine themselves more thoroughly than they did in the past, and hopefully to seek appropriate solutions to remedy shortcomings that are detected. Nevertheless, while it is clear that such a process of examination is not always followed by actions that will rectify the deficiencies which have been detected, there is an increasing interest in programs that will promote the educational growth and development of schools. These programs for school development would appear to provide a sound basis for improving the quality of education in South Australia. However, it is important to recognize that the evaluation of schools and colleges and programs of school development are not ends in themselves. They are only the means for improving the quality of the education provided by the schools and colleges. Unless evaluation is carried out in such a way as to lead to change and development within a school or college, the effort involved in conducting the evaluation has been misdirected and misplaced.

## School Development Programs

12.5 The Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in 1971 drew attention to the need for the continuing education of teachers in a rapidly changing world and made recommendations that would promote increased professional growth among members of the teaching service[3]. The need for ongoing programs of this kind will always exist and may well become accentuated as a consequence of the lack of opportunities for teacher mobility and promotion that are envisaged for the future. The report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission in 1973 also recommended that moneys be made available for programs to assist teachers and administrators to raise their levels of competence. These programs were provided, in part, by courses organized by joint committees comprising representatives of both government and non-government schools, and in part, by procedures initiated by teachers themselves[4]. As the programs became established some difficulties were encountered in obtaining relief teachers and with the financing of these relief teachers to enable classroom teachers to attend these inservice courses. Furthermore, it was inevitable that some disruption to the work of the schools should have occurred. The shortcomings of these approaches have gradually become apparent, with some disillusionment and some reluctance on the part of schools to allow teachers to leave their classrooms to select from a smorgasbord of courses one that is of interest primarily to them and not necessarily to the schools. Much has

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[3] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971. op. cit., pp.128-130.

[4] Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission (Chairman: P.H. Karmel). Schools in Australia, Canberra: AGPS, 1973, pp.119-125.

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been accomplished through inservice programs and there is now widespread acceptance of the continuing need for teacher development and inservice activities. Nevertheless, there is also a widespread recognition that these programs can do little to improve directly the quality of the education provided by schools, or to remedy the shortcomings that have been detected in schools as a result of an evaluation.

12.6 The Schools Commission in its Report for the Triennium 1982-84[5] advanced the view that there was a need for a consolidated focus in teacher development programs on the school. For the coming triennium it advocated that the emphasis in inservice work should be on school improvement:

> In shaping the nature of schooling for the 1980s it is important that school communities be encouraged to assess their school's performance, examine its organizational arrangements, consider its overall offering and the special needs of its pupils, and devise plans leading to modifications and changes that substantially improve the quality of the service offered[6].

This approach which involves a focusing on the activities of a school by the members of the staff of the school is one of the most effective forms of staff development and is fully endorsed by the Committee. Furthermore, it commends this approach not only to the Education Department, which is aware of and has considerable interest in the approach, but also to the Department of Technical and Further Education.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R12.1 the major focus of the teacher and lecturer development programs in South Australian schools and colleges should be directed towards school and college improvement for at least a period of five years.

The establishment of programs which are directed towards school and college improvement are a necessary prerequisite for increasing the effectiveness of school and college evaluations. Unless there is an awareness and acknowledgement of the value of evaluation exercises to produce change within a school or college, there is little likelihood that the evaluation will be used to improve the quality of education provided by a school or college.

12.7 The Committee would not wish to see a sudden cessation of all other inservice programs that are concerned with the continuing professional growth of the teaching service. As has been commented elsewhere in this report, teachers should be encouraged to continue to give of their own time to attend such programs, where this is appropriate, and should be given recognition and standing as a consequence of participation in such programs. However, the Committee would envisage a significant scaling down of inservice activities associated with professional development during the hours of schooling, particularly where relief teachers would be required and where the absence of teachers from classes was involved. Inservice education programs relating to school development should continue to be conducted under the conditions that have applied in the past but with greater emphasis on regional or local programs.

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[5] Schools Commission. Report for the Triennium 1982-84. Canberra Schools Commission, 1981. pp.204-210.

[6] ibid. p.205

12.8 If the thrust of teacher development and inservice education programs is to focus on school development and to be primarily concerned with improving the quality of the education provided for all students in the school or college, then it is clear that the effects of such an emphasis will only be significant and lasting if there is a commitment and enthusiasm by all concerned for improving the quality of education provided by the school or college. Thus it is necessary for the School or College Councils and the parents, the teachers and the ancillary staff, as well as the regional administration all to accept fully the changed approach. However, it is also essential that the Principal of each school or college must be totally committed to the emphasis and must be prepared to initiate a program of institutional development within the school or college. Consequently, the starting point in the implementation of school development programs must be the Principals of the schools and colleges. It will be a substantial undertaking to achieve this commitment from each and every school and college Principal, and to facilitate the implementation of appropriate activities within schools and colleges. For these reasons the Committee would not envisage a program of short duration and consequently it believes that a substantial effort over at least five years and perhaps longer is required.

12.9 There is likely to be a tendency in the initial stages of such a program for attention to be directed towards organizational issues, and the problems that are generated as a consequence of the location of the school and its structural characteristics. These matters will no doubt be of considerable interest. However, those matters that relate to the curriculum of the schools and colleges are of greater relevance and importance. The view that we have taken in this report (see Chapter 4) is that recommended curricula should be prepared by Curriculum Committees for use at the primary and secondary school levels. Where schools wish to do so, they may develop their own curricula, and obtain interim approval through their School Councils and Principals and through lodging their curriculum statements with the Regional Director. The total curriculum of the school must, however, be reviewed on a regular basis by an appropriate panel and courses that had been granted interim approval would need to be recommended for approval by a review panel. It is important to emphasize that this approach does not deny a school the right to develop its own curricula, but it would for many schools lead to a greater emphasis on curriculum implementation than on curriculum development. The Committee sees the consideration of curriculum matters as an important component of programs of school development, and the emphasis within such programs must necessarily be both on curriculum implementation and curriculum development. In addition, it is essential to note that the adoption of this approach would mean that the school became the centre for much of the inservice work associated with both curriculum matters and school development.

12.10 The Committee would wish to emphasize that schools will have a greater need for resource persons with special expertise who can maintain a long-term relationship with the schools in their work of school improvement. It is important that these advisers should not only be responsive to school needs, but should also be readily accessible to the schools. This will be best achieved by having as many such advisory staff as possible based in regional offices to increase their access to schools. Consequently the Committee sees that the approach it has outlined above is completely consistent with its recommendations that there should be, wherever possible, a redirection of advisory service staff from the central administration to the regional offices[8]. Nevertheless, the Committee could envisage a situation arising in which the demand for persons of special expertise would exceed the availability of such staff. Consequently, it would wish to emphasize that schools will need to build up the necessary skills to undertake their own programs of school improvement largely from within the school itself, rather than relying to a considerable extent on an external person from outside the school with special expertise.

## The Allocation of Resources to Schools

12.11 In South Australia, staff are allocated to schools according to a formula related in the main to the size of the school. There is, however, a negotiable component of the staffing of schools and it would seem that all schools receive some additional staff above those allocated according to the formula. Nevertheless, some schools with special needs receive additional staff to assist them to meet those needs. It appears that when the teacher staffing formulae were introduced they were intended to satisfy the teacher staffing needs of a majority of schools with the negotiable components being applied to schools with special needs. With all schools now receiving some negotiable staff the basis for the allocation of these is unclear to the Committee. Their allocation would appear to involve negotiations between the Principal, the Regional Director and the central administration, and the allocation system appears to consume substantial administrative effort without providing assurance that staffing allocations reflect equitably the relative needs of schools.

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[8] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., Chapter 6.

12.12 Schools also receive supplementary funding for special purposes from different sections of the central administration, and the Committee learnt from time to time of different funds that were available to assist schools in special need. The Committee does not doubt that such funds are used wisely and well. Nevertheless, the lack of clear information on the availability of such funds and on the purposes for which they are given to schools has raised the need for some rationalization of policies and practices associated with the allocation of supplementary resources to schools.

12.13 During recent years there have been several categories of funds made available to government and non-government schools which have generally been obtained from the Commonwealth Schools Commission. Such moneys have, in the main, been allocated to schools by committees set up within the State to distribute the available funds according to the quality of the submissions made, and/or the assessed need of the school. The programs that have been set up and which have distributed moneys in this way have been listed below:

1. The Disadvantaged Schools Program has distributed moneys to schools, following an assessment of need of the school and on receipt of an appropriate submission made by the school.
2. The Innovations Program, subsequently known as the Special Projects Program has assisted schools to undertake an activity that contributed to educational change and the introduction of innovation, but has been terminated as from the beginning of 1982.

3. The Choice and Diversity Program has sponsored initiatives within and among schools, as a catalyst for change in the ways in which public resources for government schooling could be managed, and educational opportunities could be placed within a framework of options.

4. The Migrant and Multicultural Education Programs, administered since 1976 by the Schools Commission, have at various times allocated moneys to schools with a high concentration of students of ethnic origin, in order to provide for English language instruction on a student withdrawal basis, as well as through other approaches including bilingual programs. Moreover, the program has supported general changes in school organization that would better meet the needs of students from non-English-speaking backgrounds and programs that have fostered positive multicultural attitudes among all students.

5. The Special Education Program has provided supplementary funding for special schools and schools with special classes and has assisted in the integration of handicapped students into regular schools.

6. The Country Areas Program of the Schools Commission has provided additional funds to schools in declared rural areas.

More recently proposals have been advanced for Transition Education Programs, to be administered by the Commonwealth Schools Commission, that will enable schools, on the submission of a proposal by their School Councils, to obtain supplementary funding to undertake projects in the area of transition education.

12.14 In South Australia a scheme currently operates that is known as the Capital Assistance Scheme and that permits a school to obtain a loan to enable it to build additional facilities. In the 1981-82 financial year it was estimated that there would be 24 projects supported by the scheme with a total estimated cost of approximately $3.5 million dollars.

12.15 Certain of the Commonwealth Schools Commission's programs require that some form of evaluation should take place to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the work being undertaken by a particular school, and to ensure some accountability for the moneys provided to a school. The piecemeal approach to evaluation and the short-term nature of many of the projects undertaken with moneys from these different sources are of concern.

12.16 As a consequence of declining enrolments many schools hold additional facilities in the form of extra rooms that they use for a variety of purposes, ranging from remedial education and craft programs to sources of supplementary income through the leasing of the buildings to outside organizations. The cost of maintenance of these facilities is substantial as is the cost of regular cleaning and the additional power required to light and heat the buildings. Some rationalization of the use of these facilities is clearly needed.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R12.2 (a) the Education Department should establish a special unit within the Educational Facilities Directorate that would be responsible for the administration of all special purpose resource and activities programs including the moneys coming from the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the Capital Works Assistance Scheme, and the rationalization of the additional facilities held by schools as a result of declining enrolments;

(b) the Education Department should establish a small unit within the Personnel Directorate that would be responsible for the allocation of all staff above formula, normally included in the negotiable component of staffing;

(c) Regional Offices should submit with assigned priorities all claims for additional staffing and resources to these two units, that would determine the allocation of staffing and resources according to agreed policies;

(d) standard procedures should be developed that would be employed by all schools to report annually on the use of the additional support that they had received as staff or other resources, and on the effectiveness of the programs conducted with the additional support; and

(e) consideration should be given to the inclusion of the non-government schools in certain programs associated with the allocation of additional resources, with a representative from the non-government sector involved in determining the allocation of grants.

12.17 The Committee has proposed the establishment of these two units and the development of policies for the allocation of additional staffing and resources to schools because it has become aware of the multiplicity of committees that currently operate across the State to make available additional support to schools in a variety of forms. For some of these programs, substantial administrative effort would seem to be involved to allocate relatively small sums of money. While for some programs such as those conducted by the Commonwealth Schools Commission there is a formal requirement for evaluation, the multiplicity of schemes would seem to indicate that there is little evaluation being carried out of the effectiveness of the additional staff and resources which are provided for schools.

12.18 The Committee is concerned that one of the most effective of the Commonwealth Schools Commission's programs, known as the Special Projects Program which has done much to introduce innovation and change to schools should be terminated.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R12.3 the Education Department should give consideration to providing a special supplementary fund administered by the unit within the Educational Facilities Directorate to permit and encourage schools to undertake projects involving educational change and innovation that were directed towards school improvement and curriculum development.

12.19 Any program that might be proposed for the evaluation of schools must necessarily be concerned with improving the quality of education provided by the schools. Thus, it must take into consideration the School Development Program, the processes for approval of the curriculum of the schools advocated in Chapter 4 of this report and the procedures adopted for allocating staff and resources to schools. Not only could the evaluation program be used to assess and judge the effectiveness of the different supplementary support schemes provided for schools, but it could undertake an evaluation of the support provided for an individual school in terms of the total needs and program of the school. At the present time any evaluation that is carried out is inevitably undertaken in isolation and any application for supplementary support to a school is unrelated to other sources of support being provided, as well as being unrelated to the total program of the school. The Committee believes that some overall rationalization of the various supplementary support schemes and proposes that this rationalization should be integrated into a program of evaluation of schools.

## A School Evaluation Program

12.20 During recent years the staff of the Directorate of Research and Planning and some of the staff of the Regional Directorates have given considerable attention to undertaking school evaluations and to developing guidelines for the management of school evaluation programs. The materials

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that have been prepared serve various purposes and have all helped and encouraged schools to undertake evaluation studies of different types ranging from the full evaluation of a school over a relatively long period through to the examination of a particular problem within a school or a particular aspect of a school's program. Any distinctions that might be made between the curriculum evaluation of a school and the evaluation of the management of a school are blurred. Curriculum evaluation within a school, as is consistent with programs of school based curriculum development, is seen to be an integral part of school evaluation studies. The Committee has examined the work that has been done and has talked to some of the people who have been involved in school evaluation studies and notes certain shortcomings of this work. First, through the policies of permitting work on school evaluations to be undertaken from the Directorate of Research and Planning there has been little interchange of ideas between that Directorate and the Curriculum and Regional Directorates, except through the publications that have been issued. The Committee believes that the findings of evaluations of this kind must be taken into full consideration by those involved in curriculum planning and development, but this is not taking place, nor is it recognized as a shortcoming. Secondly, there is a strong tendency for the report of a school evaluation to remain a relatively confidential document, and thus it produces little change in the practices, programs and policies of the school. Thirdly, since it is generally regarded that the report of the evaluation is not a public document it is, in general, not made available to the officers of the central or regional administration, so that they can build a sound picture of the effectiveness of the school or of its policies and curricula. Indeed, where they would appear to have a duty to assist the school to lift its performance in certain areas, these officers do not have access to the necessary information. Fourthly, some of the evaluation studies have been time consuming and costly, and as a consequence there is the danger of disillusionment with the value of such exercises.

12.21 It is clearly important that the criticisms advanced above are taken into consideration in the development of programs of evaluation for the future. Perhaps the two most serious deficiencies in the present pattern of school evaluation are first, that the review process is separated from the planning process; i.e. there is a looking back over what has been done, without a corresponding forward looking in planning for the future. Secondly, there is little recognition of the need for public accountability associated with the expenditure of public moneys. Those who are involved within a school may be well-satisfied when a review is undertaken, but they do not acknowledge the need for the results of the review to become known to those who accept

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responsibility for the school - its school council, the regional office, the central administration and possibly the State Parliament. However, it is possible and indeed likely, that a review of a school could be very critical of certain aspects of the running of the school and of the work of some of the staff within the school. In such cases, a balance must be achieved between an evaluation report that is destructively critical and one that is so bland as to have little meaning. What is required is a report that uses information from the past, whether it be good or bad, to direct attention to the adequacy of the plans for the future. If the emphasis at the end of the evaluation is on future plans, there is a greater likelihood that the evaluation will be constructive in nature and thus of considerable use.

## The Prospective Review Model

12.22 The approach that is advanced by the Committee is for a 'prospective review'. In such a review the emphasis in the review should be associated with the planning for the coming triennial period. The school would in essence be involved in planning its policies and programs and would, in addition, be making application for supplementary support over and above the level of staffing and resources made available to all schools according to a publicly stated formula. Such planning would involve the school Principal and staff, in collaboration with the school council, in the development of policy statements for the school. These statements would include the general goals, the curriculum objectives, the more detailed specification of the courses of instruction, the teaching methods and assessment procedures to be employed by the school, as well as statements on the non-curricular and extra-curricular facets of the school's program. It might be expected that in the preparation of these statements consultations with parents, students and the wider community would occur. In addition, some evaluative studies of the school could well be carried out by the school as part of an examination of particular problems perceived to exist within the school. The Principal and staff would also prepare statements on the additional staffing and resources required to cope satisfactorily with the particular problems encountered by the school. Some indication of the extent and areas in which supplementary support might be made available would need to be provided to the school in advance. The submissions made by the school together with all appropriate documentation would be passed to a review panel who would examine the documents, visit the school, meet with staff and students and discuss with them the needs of the school. The panel would then be in a position to make an assessment of the success with which the school was operating under its current program and with its current resources. The Panel of five persons would comprise a Principal of another school, a member of staff of the regional office, a person from the central administration, a member of the school council of another school chosen by the council of the school under review, and a person who would customarily be from outside the school system. It is anticipated that the Panel would spend between two and five days on its tasks depending on the size of the school and would prepare a report on its evaluation of the school, assessing the progress made by the school over the past three years as well as making an assessment of its needs for the coming three-year period. The reports prepared would be forwarded to the regional office and to the central administration and would be used in the allocation of supplementary support to the school for the ensuing triennial period.

12.23 The advantages of such a 'prospective review' are that they combine the need for a regular review of the school and a reporting of that review, both for accountability purposes, and to inform the Principal and staff of the school of the success of its current policies and programs, with a need for forward planning within the school and the making of recommendations on the level of supplementary support or additional capital facilities required by the school to function effectively. Furthermore, such an approach would avoid the extensive duplication that currently exists when the school makes submissions to State and Commonwealth authorities to obtain supplementary grants to assist it in carrying out its work. It would clearly be undesirable for the limited supplementary resources to be made available to schools simply on the quality of their submissions. The approach of a prospective review would permit an assessment to be made of the needs of a school, of the success with which it had operated in the past, and on the quality of its plans and projects for the future.

12.24 The traditional procedures of an annual inspection of schools that existed in South Australia for 100 years have passed. The reasons behind their decline and falling are accepted, and they could not be re-introduced effectively. However, a new system is clearly required, because the voluntary nature of the present school controlled evaluations means that they are not yielding worthwhile results for a sufficient number of schools. The Committee commends the 'prospective review' approach for consideration, and suggests that it could well be used for all schools within the State. It must be recognized, however, that these proposals will place a further burden on staff in promotion positions in schools for which they have not, to date, received the necessary training.

In the above paragraphs the prospective review approach has been described as it applies to schools. However, the Committee believes that all educational institutions, parent-child centres, schools, colleges, branches, centres and units should be required to undergo a review of this type every three years.

12.25 The review of a school would also be used to authorize approval of the courses of instruction provided by the school and the curricula developed within the school as advocated in Chapter 4 of this report. It is important, however, to recognize that the program of review proposed is not a mammoth undertaking superimposed on already existing schemes but a proposal for the integration of a large number of unco-ordinated schemes currently in operation, which would appear to have grown up over the past decade as additional funding became available. These schemes are clearly in need of rationalization. The supplementary support schemes at present provided to schools involve the disbursement of staffing and resources without an examination of the complete program of the school. The review system proposed should not be seen as requiring additional reserves of staff or resources for schools except in the case of the program for the promotion of change and innovation advocated in Recommendation R12.4. Admittedly within the scheme there is the possibility of a greater return to schools that exhibit a need for additional staffing and resources. However, this is happening already and, in the main, based on incomplete evidence. The purposes of the prospective review are three-fold: to enable a school to plan; to evaluate the total operation of the school including its curricula; and to provide to the school council, the regional office and the central administration an assessment of the school as is required for public accountability.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R12.4 (a) a program of prospective review of schools should be introduced;
(b) training should be provided for staff in promotion positions to enable schools to participate effectively in such a program of review; and
(c) the proposals for review advanced for schools should be applied to all institutions in the education sector.

## CHAPTER 13

# THE EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

### A Regular Review of the System

13.1 Expenditure on education is the largest single component of the budget of the State and has increased significantly as a proportion of the total state budget over the past decade. There is clearly a need for a continuing assessment of the progress of education in the State both for the purposes of accountability for the spending of public moneys, and more importantly because increased demands are being made and are likely to be made in the future on the educational system. Consequently, it is essential that the efficiency and effectiveness of the system should be examined regularly and that systematic plans should be laid down to ensure that the national goals that we seek as a people are capable of being provided by the educational system. It is probable that the increasing demands being made on education will require greater resources in certain areas in the future. Yet it is apparent that increased resources will not be made available unless there is clear evidence of the greatest care in their allocation and use. The general public needs to understand more adequately what progress has been made in education, and where the critical problems lie if greater attention and effort are to be focused on those problems. Moreover, the public requires this type of information if it is to give its backing to decisions made on the future allocation of resources and on the wise use of those resources to produce maximum results.

13.2(a) The Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in 1971 advocated the establishment of an Advisory Council of Education comprising representatives of bodies responsible for education at all levels, and of lay members some of whom would be nominated by parents' organizations. It was envisaged that this Advisory Council would advise on desirable developments in education, on questions relating to the development and co-ordination of education in the State and to conduct enquiries itself or through expert committees[1]. In addition, it was recommended that the Council would report every five years to the Minister of Education and the public on the purposes, curriculum and methods of the schools in the State[2]. The Advisory Council has not been established over the past decade and there would appear to be clear opposition in certain circles to its being set up in the immediate future.

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1. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1971. op. cit., p.468.
2. ibid. p.520.

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As a consequence the function that it would have served of carrying out a continuing review of the provision of education in the State is not likely to occur in the way that the Karmel Committee envisaged.

13.2(b) An alternative approach for a systematic evaluation and review of the system would be to set up, every ten years, a Committee of Enquiry that would be entrusted with the tasks of examining the developments that had occurred over the past decade, considering the plans for the future, and attempting to make an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses as well as the value of the proposals for the future. That Committee would operate very much in the manner in which this present Committee is working, and with similar fairly broad terms of reference. However, it must be noted in passing that the present Committee has received few documents that would indicate that thought had been given to a rationalization of the use of resources at a time of changing conditions and circumstances, and even fewer documents that have sought to plan realistically for the future. Indeed in the course of the enquiry it became apparent that many such documents which existed were not being forwarded to the Committee, for fear of disclosing a tentative proposal that might suffer from premature release. The Committee appeared to be caught in a situation in which political considerations outweighed the educational merit of the plans being advanced. It is of course even more likely that such problems would be encountered by an Advisory Council of Education, and would continually confound the issues under consideration and review, because of the cumulative effects that would be present in a Council with a continuing membership. The Committee recognizes the need for a regular evaluative review of the educational system, but has some reservations about the manner in which such a review should be conducted. It also has become aware of some general disillusionment in recent years with the effectiveness of Committees of Advice to governments in other parts of Australia. Since an ongoing Avisory Council does not appear to be acceptable, a periodic review would seem to be essential.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R13.1 at least every ten years provision should be made for a thorough evaluative review of the educational system at all levels, early childhood, schooling, technical and further education and higher education and that the report of the review should be made public on its completion.

It is important that the evaluative review be seen as an accounting to the wider public on the progress of education in the State, as well as providing information that would facilitate the making of decisions on the extent of the resources to be allocated to education and on the manner in which the available resources might most wisely be used in the future.

## Indices of Educational Progress

13.3 In most areas of public concern indices are available that summarize in a convenient manner the general state of the nation; such indices as the birthrate and the mortality rates for deaths attributable to different causes are indicators of aspects of health. Indices of productivity, cost of living, and inflation as well as interest rates tell something about the state of the economy. Unemployment rates, indices of population growth, its rate of increase, the extent and direction of migration, all report on certain social conditions in the country. These indices serve to keep the public informed on changes in these important policy areas. The need for this type of information was recognized long ago; and over the years, the means for obtaining this information were worked out and have successively been refined. Education has developed few such indices that it can use to report educational progress to the public. In the state censuses of the last century and at the beginning of this century, information was collected and presented on levels of literacy. However, with the gradual movement towards universal literacy, such indices dropped out of use. The only indices that are currently used to any extent are those of age and grade participation rates in schooling, and to a lesser extent in post-secondary education. There is nothing else in the field of education available in the form of estimates or indices that enable the public to understand the progress that is being made and the problems that exist in the field.

13.4 The absence of such indices has made education vulnerable to ill-informed attack on such issues as declining standards that are necessarily based on personal views, distorted reports, and journalistic impressions. As a consequence the schools in South Australia are from time to time attacked by some and defended by others without having any evidence to support either claim. The Committee must express surprise and concern that in South Australia no information has been collected over the years and made available to the public that could be used as evidence. Information on the inputs into education are available in the Annual Reports of Education to the State Parliament, but no evidence on the products of education have been publicly released that would be of value in the debate on educational progress. There is a general recognition that the products of education are complex and that there are clear dangers in making attempts to use simple indices of school performance to report on education, lest these indices come to be seen as the only outcomes of education that are worthy of consideration.

13.5 The value of such information has been recognized in recent years by Committees of Enquiry at the national level. The House of Representatives Select Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties in 1976 strongly recommended that nation-wide surveys of literacy and numeracy should be conducted at regular intervals[3]. Subsequently, the Commonwealth Government's Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training set up under the chairmanship of Professor B.R. Williams recommended initiatives for the regular monitoring of student learning outcomes, and argued that interest be not confined to the minimum levels of performance[4]. In addition, a Study Group, under the chairmanship of Mr. A.H. Webster, which was established by the Commonwealth's Education Research and Development Committee specifically to consider the need for a national assessment program in Australia, emphasized the importance of providing assistance with assessment to schools and teachers. In addition, it recommended periodic national monitoring of general literacy[5]. Such proposals have also been strongly supported by the Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia that recommended that the federal government should increase its support for national monitoring of literacy and numeracy and of other data collections in education[6]. More recently, support has come from the Commonwealth Government's Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts which recognized some hostility towards national monitoring of literacy and numeracy, but which stated its belief in the desirability of an ongoing assessment to determine the effectiveness of a nationally accepted education program directed towards achieving the highest possible levels of literacy and numeracy in Australia. The Committee was also of the opinion

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3. Commonwealth of Australia. House of Representatives Select Committee on Specific Learning Difficulties. (Chairman: A.G. Cadman, M.P.) *Learning Difficulties in Children and Adults*. Report of the Committee. Canberra: AGPS, 1976.
4. Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training (Chairman: B.R. Williams) *Education, Training and Employment*. Report of the Committee. Canberra: AGPS, 1979. p.7.
5. Education Research and Development Committee. Study Group (Chairman: A.H. Webster). *National Assessment of Educational Progress*. ERDC Report No.26. Canberra: AGPS, 1980.
6. Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia (Chairman: R.H. Myers). *Technological Change in Australia*. Report of the Committee. Canberra: AGPS, 1980. p.184.

that national monitoring, impartially administered, and based on the use of a criterion-referenced approach, would in the long term be of assistance to the teaching profession[7]. While there is strong support at the national level, not confined simply to the issues of literacy and numeracy but concerned also with more advanced skills, there is not the same level of support in the Australian States to obtain information that might be made available to reassure the general public about the integrity of the schools and colleges in meeting their responsibilities. The Committee recognizes the many problems associated with the conduct of such testing programs and believes that they can be met in two different ways.

## A Program of Assessment

13.6 It is clear that information on student performance in the area of literacy and numeracy would be of value at both the state and national levels as a means of helping the public to understand the results being achieved by the educational system as well as the problems encountered. There is little doubt that some students leave school without an adequate level of mastery of these basic skills to enable them to become effective members of our society, while there are some children in our schools beyond the age of 10 years who have not achieved a sufficient level of competence in the basic skills to participate effectively in the learning programs provided by the schools. Thus any study of student performance in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy must be concerned with both these aspects of educational outcomes, namely the capacity to participate effectively in a modern technological society, and the ability to profit from further learning in the schools. The areas of interest in such a study would seem to be reading, writing, speaking, listening and certain relations of number and space. An approach to the assessment of students' skills in these areas would involve the identification of specific tasks and competencies that students at school might be expected to possess and that would enable them to participate successfully in the programs of the school and to live and work effectively in Australian society. Around these identified tasks and competencies, appropriate performance tests would be developed to measure levels of performance in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, namely, reading, writing, speaking, listening and numeration. Each test item would measure a relevant task, and each set of test items would involve a sampling of tasks of a particular type.

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[7] Commonwealth of Australia. Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts (Chairman: G.S. Davidson). Preparation for the Workforce. Canberra: AGPS, 1981. p.32.

It is clearly not necessary to test all students at a given age or grade level in order to estimate with a high level of accuracy the number of students who have achieved mastery of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy as assessed by the tests of reading, writing, speaking, listening and numeration. Estimates can be made by drawing a sample of schools and of students within schools and testing the sample of students. Since it is proposed that testing will take place on successive occasions, it would be necessary to repeat certain test items in successive testings as well as to devise ways of locating both items and sets of items on a common scale of measurement so that effective comparisons could be made between occasions.

13.7 The information obtained for a particular set of items on any one occasion is of considerable interest since it provides data on the proportions of students achieving mastery of that set of items and of the associated task or tasks. However, it is important that the data collected should be fully interpreted before being released to the public. The release of uninterpreted results must surely invite misrepresentation and unfortunate comparisons. If the authors of the report and the persons responsible for the conduct of the study are unable or unwilling to pass comment on whether they think that the levels of performance being reported are satisfactory or unsatisfactory, then it is essential that the test results should be reviewed by an advisory committee of curriculum specialists whose members would identify both areas of strength and areas in need of improvement, and who would subsequently make quite detailed recommendations for remedial action. At the national level in Australia it may be difficult to make appropriate general statements and to recommend the necessary remedial action. However at the state level it is essential that such an analysis of the results of the study should be carried out and be widely reported not only to the school system itself but also to the general public.

13.8 Of greater importance, however, than the data reported on a single occasion will be the trends that are observable over time. An upward trend would show that the school system had made advances in the teaching experiences provided, and that students as a collective group had made progress in learning. A downward trend would indicate an area in which a problem of significance existed and in which widespread remedial programs were needed not just at the age or grade of testing, but throughout the preceding stages of schooling. Evidence of a downturn in performance could well lead to the undertaking of a more detailed study, or possibly to a re-allocation of resources to cope with the specific problem that was observed.

13.9 It is important that, in the conduct of the testing program, information should also be obtained that would permit a more detailed examination of the performance of certain subgroups of interest in the schools. This would require the collection of information on type of community served by the school, for example, whether rural or metropolitan, the ethnic origin and race of the student, the language of the home, the sex of the student, the socio-economic level of the father's occupation and any known specific learning disabilities possessed by the student. From this information it would be possible to examine the performance of particular subgroups after making allowance for such factors as the socio-economic level of the home. Information of this type could be of considerable use within the State for the allocation of resources for supplementary programs of funding to schools. It would be important to note that in such a testing program information on the performance of individual students would be of little interest, but should always be reported back to the schools involved. Furthermore, information on the level of performance of the sample of students from any particular school would not be relevant to the objectives of the program. The purposes of the testing program would be to provide information at the State level.

13.10 The frequency with which such a testing program should be carried out is open to some debate. It might be suggested that five year intervals would be appropriate, and probably, more frequent testing would supply largely redundant information. If, however, students were tested at ages of 9 years, 13 years and 17 years, the data could be of greater interest if testing took place at four year intervals and the same cohort of students was sampled on the three successive occasions. It is, nevertheless, important to note that a continuing program is more easily conducted because a small team of research workers have to be assembled and trained in the skills associated with the administration of such a program. Thus it would be desirable to set up the program in such a way that testing was carried out each year in one of the four areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and numeration. Thus a four year cycle would be established so that each area would be reported on once every four years.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R13.2 (a) a program built around a four-year cycle for monitoring performance in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy should be established on a continuing basis, with testing in one of the four areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and numeration being conducted each year, and reported at successive four-year intervals;

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(b) information should be collected on the sex, age, grade, school location, father's and mother's occupation, ethnicity, race, language spoken in the home and known specific learning difficulties of the students so that information on the performance of subgroups of interest could be reported;

(c) within the State an advisory group of curriculum specialists should be established who would examine the results of each testing program and report on the implications of the findings for educational practice within the State; and

(d) both the report of the study and the report by the advisory group of curriculum specialists should be published and made public information.

### Curriculum and Teaching Probes

13.11 A monitoring program such as the one outlined in the previous section does not provide information on many important curriculum areas and on the teaching procedures used in those areas. At one time with courses of instruction laid down and with methods of teaching inspected and reported on by the inspectorial service, those responsible for curriculum planning had some knowledge of the work being undertaken in the schools. Nevertheless, a nation-wide curriculum survey brought forward, in the late 1940s, information from across Australia on the curriculum and teaching methods of the primary schools that was of considerable value in the planning of education in the States for the next decade[8]. Today with greater devolution of responsibility to schools in South Australia for both curriculum development and with greater freedom available for innovatory practices in teaching, there is little information that is soundly based on what is being taught in schools and the manner in which the teaching occurs. In this report, while the Committee has advocated the use of recommended curricula, it has not argued that the teaching of standard curricula should become obligatory. Nor has the report argued that, with the use of prospective review procedures in schools, there should be a re-introduction of the formerly used inspection procedures. In general, it must be acknowledged that these procedures died out because they were believed to serve very little useful purpose. There is, nevertheless, little sound information available at the present time on what is being taught in schools. Nor is there a clear picture of what a primary school timetable would look like and the range of variability that might currently exist in

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8. Radford, W.C., Curriculum Survey: Report to the Directors of Education. Melbourne: ACER (duplicated), 1950.

the teaching of different subjects. There is clearly a need for the development of strategies that would map both the total curriculum and teaching practices, as well as the learning outcomes of the programs offered by the schools.

13.12 One study that has been carried out recently in Australia to obtain some of the information of the type referred to above is a study titled: Changes in Secondary School Mathematics in Australia: 1964-1978[9]. In this study Rosier sought to document the curriculum sequence in schools which comprised the intended curriculum as specified by authorities within the education system, the translated curriculum as taught by the teachers within the classrooms of the schools, and the achieved curriculum which was indicated by the performance of the students. In addition, Rosier collected information on student attitudes, time spent in learning mathematics and on homework, on the use of calculators in the classrooms and on certain home background characteristics of the students and sought inter-relationships between these factors. Furthermore, he was able to examine the nature and extent of the changes in these relationships between the two occasions, 14 years apart. A further report from his study has been prepared that has looked at changes in the differences between the sexes in their performance in and their attitudes towards mathematics between the two occasions[10]. These reports are recent examples of a probe in the curriculum area of mathematics at the secondary school level that was intended to provide information for curriculum planning in the future.

13.13 It is not the purpose of investigations such as the monitoring study in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to seek information on teaching methods, on the structure of the curriculum, on time spent in learning or on explanatory relations between these factors. The emphasis of the monitoring study is essentially on description, rather than explanation, and on the establishment of indices of student performance for use in public debate, rather than the assembling of a fuller picture of what is taking place in schools in a particular area of the curriculum. However, curriculum and teaching probes do provide information that could be of considerable use in documenting change and the consequences of change in the teaching and learning taking place in schools. These probe type studies are seen to be necessary to take up such issues as were noted by the Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia concerned with subject choice and the subsequent education and employment history of students, and with education in the area of mathematics[11]. In addition, they could involve the study of performance levels expected of students as advocated by the Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training which would go beyond the minimum levels as are involved in studies of literacy and numeracy[12]. Furthermore, such studies could form the basis for a thorough examination of the work of the schools and help to identify areas on which to direct greater effort.

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[9] Rosier, M.J. Changes in Secondary School Mathematics in Australia 1964-1978. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1980.

[10] Mason, J.D. Towards Equality: Progress by Girls in the Study of Mathematics in Australian Secondary Schools. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1982.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R13.3 curriculum and teaching probe studies should be undertaken every 10 years in the areas of fundamental learning associated with language, mathematics, science and social learning.

## Technical Education Probes

13.14 The Committee also believes that curriculum and teaching probes could bring about substantial improvements within areas of the curriculum of colleges of technical and further education. In this field there is also a need for the conduct of periodic national surveys to assess both the adequacy of programs in meeting the needs of Australian industry and the levels of achievement of trainees in particular areas of knowledge and skills. The Committee is aware that substantial work has been done both nationally and within the State to assess both the needs of industry for people with technical expertise and the value of the training programs required. Notwithstanding this, the Committee has expressed concern in Chapter 5 at the failure of the Department of Further Education to adapt its programs to reflect emerging technological developments. There will be a continuing requirement to conduct periodic surveys of the needs of industry, to evaluate the appropriateness of training programs and to compare programs conducted in the various States to learn from successful innovations.

13.15 The assessment of student achievement in programs of technical training has traditionally relied heavily on written examinations conducted by individual colleges and demonstrated competence in practical tasks on the job or in the college workshops. With the projected trend for an increasing percentage of full-time students in these programs, less reliance can be placed on the on-the-job assessment of competence by employers, many of whom would not be in a sound position to assess competence in areas of new technology. Furthermore, assessment by individual colleges and employers provides little guidance as to the levels of achievement of students in one college relative to other colleges. The Committee recognizes that the diversity of program between different colleges creates difficulties in devising a survey or testing program which is relevant to students in all colleges undertaking similar programs. Nevertheless, this area of training is so vital to national development and to the evaluation of performance of colleges that the Committee believes that studies should be undertaken into the feasibility of introducing meaningful national testing or survey programs in areas of technical knowledge and skill.

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[11] Committee of Inquiry into Technological Change in Australia, 1980. op. cit., p. 184.

[12] Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training, 1979. op. cit., p.7.

13.16 With the recent establishment of an Industrial and Commercial Training Commission in South Australia and a National Research Centre in Technical and Further Education, the mechanisms exist to develop surveys of the nature referred to above. The proposals by this Committee for the establishment of a Technical and Further Education Advisory Committee and a program management and evaluation structure in the Department of Technical and Further Education are also relevant to this need for survey programs in areas of technical knowledge and skill. The Committee makes no specific recommendations as to the precise nature of the surveys which should be conducted as this is more appropriately the task of the various bodies referred to above.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R13.4 periodic national surveys should be conducted in areas of technical knowledge and skill to assess the adequacy of the Technical and Further Education training programs being provided to meet national needs.

## Program Performance Budgeting

13.17 The Committee is aware that the South Australian Government is working towards the introduction of program performance budgeting which, it is argued, would enable a more thorough examination to be made of the effectiveness of different facets of the total state budget. The Committee has gained the impression that for a variety of reasons the introduction of this system has not worked well in the field of education, and as a consequence the supplementary budget papers for the 1981-82 budget could not be made available to the Committee until some weeks after the budget was released.

The Committee has sought to grapple with the manner with which the budgets of the Education Department and the Department of Further Education were broken down into more detailed components. Moreover, the Committee recognizes that a full program performance budgeting strategy may be required to give a detailed and accurate picture. It has also become aware that when reductions are made in all sectors of education from the early childhood area through to the field of further education, they are not always being made in areas of inefficiency or surplus, but sometimes in areas where there will be a public outcry against the reductions that have been made. However, it is clear that the present Committee of Enquiry is not in the position to grapple fully with such problems. Consequently, it commends the approach being taken to introduce program performance budgeting in anticipation that it will expose for more detailed scrutiny some of the issues that have both confused and confounded the Committee.

13.18 Although progress in the actual implementation of program performance budgeting has been slow, it must be recognized that the educational budget is vast and complex and that it may take considerable time before a complete system can be designed for the field of education and confidently applied. Furthermore, it is difficult and sometimes confusing in education to identify the benefits of particular programs, because the products of education cannot be readily measured or even assessed with any degree of certainty. It is also difficult to isolate the costs of particular programs as the Committee has learnt from its attempts to do this in some areas. Consequently while appropriate analytical techniques might not be available for relating benefits to costs, an even more limiting restriction exists because neither the benefits nor the costs would appear able to be accurately assessed. The Committee has learnt to its acute frustration the difficulties of a detailed examination of the education budget, but it believes that in future the information that it sought to obtain ought to be more readily accessible, since it considers that such information is essential both for accountability purposes and for sound policy making.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R13.5 efforts should be continued in the development of appropriate systems of program performance budgeting, and that basic systems should be subsequently revised and retested in the anticipation and hope that at some time in the future the education system might be accountable in greater detail for the money that it spends and that some of the money it receives might be put to more effective use.

# CHAPTER 14

# RAISING THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING SERVICE

## Introduction

14.1 For nearly 40 years Australian education faced a shortage of qualified teachers. Today there is a surplus. The existence of this surplus is a consequence of both the downturn in the birth rate and a general high level of unemployment that reduces the avenues to which teachers might turn for alternative employment. The surplus poses many problems, but it also provides an opportunity to lift the general quality of the teaching service in Australia. Ten years ago South Australian teachers frequently faced large classes, had little help from school assistants or teacher aides and had few opportunities for inservice education. However, in the intervening period, as we have shown in our first report, there has been a marked improvement in the conditions under which teachers work. The programs for the future would not appear to be associated with planning for further reductions in class sizes, increases in the number of school assistants available or greater opportunities for inservice education, but rather with planned and co-ordinated attempts to lift the quality of the teaching service both in schools and in colleges of technical and further education.

14.2 There are five ways in which efforts might be made to increase the competence and quality of the teaching service. First, through changes in the procedures of selection for teacher education courses and through changes in the types of courses provided, it is possible to improve the competence of those available for recruitment into the teaching service. Secondly, through changes in the procedures for the selection of teachers for employment in schools and in the procedures for induction into the work of teaching, it should be possible to ensure that only those who are competent embark on a teaching career. Thirdly, through the registration of teachers it is possible for teaching to become recognized as a vocation in which the members are required to possess a body of knowledge on which their professional skills depend and a body of techniques which distinguish teaching from other vocations. Registration of teachers provides formal and legal recognition of a need to provide protection for the public, while membership by teachers of a professional association, in the main, involves election and recognition by peers. Fourthly, through changes to the procedures used for promotion to positions of responsibility and with the use of contract appointments in relation to specific positions,

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it should be possible to ensure that only those of proven competence are advanced to, and retain, positions of responsibility for a long period. Finally, through programs of inservice education and requirements for individuals to accept primary responsibility for their personal development, attempts can be made to ensure the continuing competence of those employed in the teaching service. Many of the issues associated with these five ways of raising the quality of the teaching service have been addressed in the various reports into teacher education that have been published in Australia in the past two years[1]. It is thus not the purpose of this report to re-examine these issues nor to analyse the recommendations made by those committees and to endorse or reject their findings. Nevertheless, there are certain matters which are directly related to the raising of the quality of the teaching service that this Committee considers it necessary to address.

14.3 The Committee, in considering ways in which the quality of teaching might be raised, has noted that problems do exist, but would not wish to imply that they are of widespread and significant proportions throughout the teaching service. From its visits to schools, and from its discussions with a wide range of people across the State since it issued its first report, the Committee has found that, in general, teachers are well-regarded by their school communities. Unfortunately, there is no simple way known to the Committee by means of which it can present indisputable evidence to support this judgement. However, it strongly disagrees with the views of some critics who have recently condemned the teachers and the administration of the Education Department of South Australia.[2] Nevertheless, the Committee from its visits to schools has encountered situations in which it is recognized that a member of staff is incompetent, and that some persons are employed in a position of responsibility where they are unable to maintain the support and confidence of their school councils and school communities. Solutions to these problems must be found that are fair to both the students in the schools and to the persons who have been trained and appointed to promotion positions in South Australian schools. The Committee believes that it must consider these and related issues and advance proposals that would contribute to the long term resolution of these problems.

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[1] See: National Inquiry into Teacher Education (Chairman: J.J. Auchmuty), Teacher Education in Australia. Canberra: AGPS, 1980.
South Australian Enquiry into Teacher Education (Chairman: K.R. Gilding), Report of South Australian Enquiry into Teacher Education. Adelaide: Government Printer, South Australia, 1980.

[2] For example: Partington, G. "Our Ailing Schools". A Public Lecture delivered on Tuesday, 27 October 1981 at The Flinders University of South Australia.

## The Registration of Teachers and Lecturers

14.4 Following the passing of the Education Act, 1972, the South Australian Teachers Registration Board was established in 1974[3] for the purpose of registration of teachers in both government and non-government schools. In the establishment of the Department of Further Education under its own legislation in 1975 no separate provision was made for the registration of lecturers in that Department. However, staff of the Department of Further Education have been used increasingly to assist with the teaching of Link Courses. In these courses secondary school students, generally above the age of compulsory schooling, are given some training and experience through programs conducted in colleges of technical and further education by the staffs of these colleges. In addition, there are some courses equivalent in standing to those offered in schools that are currently being conducted in colleges of technical and further education. Such courses include preparation for the matriculation examination and courses in basic literacy and numeracy. In so far as it is the function of the Teachers Registration Board to operate a system for the registration of teachers, "with a view to safe-guarding the public interest in primary and secondary education by ensuring that it is undertaken only by competent persons",[4] it is not inappropriate that the Board should be concerned with those aspects of primary and secondary education that are carried out within colleges of technical and further education by the staff of the Department of Further Education. Thus there is considerable ambiguity associated with the functions of the Teachers Registration Board at the points of intersection between primary and secondary education and technical and further education that is in need of resolution.

14.5 The Committee was somewhat dismayed to learn in answer to its questions that there are a substantial number of private colleges providing courses in technical and further education, and that the registration of these colleges, which has formerly been undertaken by the Department of Further Education, may not be required in future. While the private colleges do not receive grants from the State Government, they do receive substantial grants from the Commonwealth Government. The Committee would not wish to be seen to denigrate the work that is currently done and has been done over a long period by some of these private colleges. However, the Committee learnt that in the past some attempts had been made to establish private colleges that, while purporting to provide educational programs, were setting out to exploit youth. The Committee believes that, just as it was essential to argue a case in its first report for the registration of non-government schools, it is now necessary to argue for the maintenance of registration procedures for all private colleges at the post-secondary level.

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[3] The Committee inadvertently gave the date of the establishment of the Board as 1975 in its first report (see para. 15.31).

[4] Education Act, 1972. Clause 66(1).

14.6 The Committee has been requested to consider issues relating to the registration of lecturers in the colleges of technical and further education. The Committee, in general, supports the need for lecturers in institutions of technical and further education, whether they are employed in publicly supported or private colleges, to be recognized as members of a profession. However, a registration process must be justified by a need to protect the public interest and is not a pre-requisite for the recognition of professional status. The registration in the future of all full-time staff at colleges of technical and further education, who are employed by the Department of Technical and Further Education and who have been appointed to their positions as a result of public advertisement and careful scrutiny by the Department, would appear to serve little useful purpose. Nevertheless, there would seem to be a need in the public interest to ensure that the private colleges employ properly qualified and competent staff.

Accordingly, the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.1 (a) all private colleges operating at the post-secondary level should be registered with the Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia; and

(b) all private colleges operating at the post-secondary level should be required to employ properly qualified and competent staff as a condition of their registration.

14.7 It would seem unsatisfactory that the Education Act, 1972 should require that primary and secondary education is conducted only by competent persons and that it is the responsibility of the Teachers Registration Board to oversee this, while courses are being conducted in colleges of technical and further education on behalf of schools by non-registered staff. Perhaps the simplest solution to this problem would be to require teaching staff, who are engaged in conducting courses, whether within colleges of technical and further education or outside, on behalf of schools and for students enrolled in primary and secondary schools, to become registered with the Teachers Registration Board under the conditions of restricted registration. Such restricted registration would not require any training in teaching, but would require certification, issued by the Department of Technical and Further Education, that appropriate preparation had been undertaken and appropriate experience had been acquired. This policy would provide flexibility and would facilitate the greater use by schools of the expertise of lecturing staff in colleges of technical and further education, and at the same time would provide a continuing safeguard for the public that those who taught and instructed students enrolled in schools were legally authorised to do so.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.2 all staff of the Department of Technical and Further Education, engaged in conducting courses on behalf of schools and for students enrolled in primary and secondary schools, should be required to hold restricted registration with the Teachers Registration Board.

## Increasing the Competence of Teachers

14.8 It was advocated in many of the submissions received by the Committee that as a requirement of re-registration every three years with the Teachers Registration Board it should be necessary for teachers to provide evidence of their participation in courses of inservice education and of their continuing competence as a teacher. The Committee also viewed it as important that every teacher at regular intervals should be required to consider whether or not he or she wished to continue working in the highly demanding vocation of teaching. However, while the Committee believes that the continuing competence of every teacher is of considerable importance, it did not believe that this could be achieved through regulations and requirements associated with registration. Consequently, the Committee in its first report unequivocally rejected any proposal to submit every teacher to reviews of this type before re-registration every three years[5]. Nevertheless, the Committee does believe that teachers should, of their own initiative, undertake further education or tertiary studies by inservice and external training and by other means, in order to maintain continuing competence. Furthermore, it would advocate that both the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education should lay down minimum guidelines for this purpose. It envisaged that it would only be by the leadership of the Principal and senior members of the staff at a school that a general raising of the competence of the staff could occur. The more senior staff members had a responsibility, it was argued:

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[5] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp.15-30 and 15-31.

> to lift the perspectives of those who work for them, and to encourage them to improve their skills and competence as a teacher and to keep abreast of relevant developments associated with what they teach in schools and how they go about their work of teaching. Thus we believe it will be by the climate in the staff room of a school, by the informal debate and discussion that takes place amongst teachers in a variety of settings, that staff will be led to participate in teacher development programs and so to improve the quality of education provided in the schools.[6]

The means by which this might be achieved would be for the Principal of each school, or in larger schools and colleges of technical and further education, for the Heads of Departments to accept responsibility for watching over the inservice education undertaken by members of staff, for counselling members of staff on the courses in which they engage, and for providing appropriate encouragement for members of staff to participate in worthwhile courses. Each staff member will have different needs and, in the main, these needs will change over successive years. For some it will be by the undertaking of further part-time study, for others interchange with a member of staff from another school, either within the State, interstate or overseas, for others, engaging in a curriculum development task or an organizational innovation, and for others again, attendance at a conference associated with membership of a professional or subject association. It is, however, important that each and every teacher in all schools and colleges should be led to take part in a significant development activity on some occasion during each year.

14.9 In Chapter 9, the Committee has drawn attention to the fact that all teaching staff in colleges of technical and further education in South Australia are entitled to 49 working days of recreation leave each year. Their counterparts in other tertiary institutions receive only 20 working days of leave. Only 75 per cent out of the full-time staff of colleges of technical and further education hold professional qualifications in teaching: a proportion significantly lower than in most other Australian States. Hence the remaining 25 per cent need to obtain such qualifications to become fully qualified lecturers. Moreover, it seems likely that nearly all teaching staff in colleges will need to gain industrial or commercial experience in working with new technology, and in becoming aware of new technological developments that have not as yet been widely introduced into South Australia. They will subsequently need to revise their courses to incorporate these new developments and the new skills associated with them. Under these circumstances it would appear essential that the conditions of employment of all lecturing staff should be renegotiated, to require them formally to undertake for a specified time

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6. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.15-31.

each year, at least 20 working days, an inservice and external education program and industrial experience without a reduction in the time given formally to work in the college. This would permit those without teaching qualifications to obtain them, for those whose qualifications relate to primary or secondary education to undertake training more appropriate to their present positions, and to provide opportunities for all to keep abreast of technological development.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.3 the conditions of recreation leave of lecturing staff in colleges of technical and further education should be renegotiated to make formal provision in the working year for the undertaking of specified programs of staff development, industrial experience and, in particular, familiarization with new technological developments.

14.10 There is a longstanding tradition that school and pre-school teachers should enjoy long vacation periods each year. It must be recognized that teaching is a demanding occupation and that many teachers require periods of refreshment and recreation to enable them to cope with the strains associated with their work. Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider whether teachers should enjoy working conditions significantly above general community standards. Improvements in teacher non-contact time provisions and in teacher assistant support during recent years have helped alleviate the work-load of teachers. However, it must also be recognized that the responsibilities of school Principals and other senior school staff, in particular, require commitments of time well in excess of the normal school day. For the general class-room teacher there are also increasing responsibilities in areas such as extra-curricular school activities, individual student support, remedial programs, student and parent counselling, and the design and evaluation of courses. Provided that teachers undertake these responsibilities and Principals have the authority to require adequate teacher effort in these areas, then there would appear to be a case for teachers to enjoy periods of vacation longer than general community standards, but perhaps not at the present high levels. There would be substantial value in Principals and teachers being provided with guidelines as to areas of responsibility which they are required to meet beyond normal class-room responsibilities. The Committee believes that substantial components of teacher and school development programs should be conducted during the vacation periods currently available to teachers. However, a significant proportion of teachers presently in schools are already engaged in further professional education, and use their vacation periods for study and the writing of essay assignments.

Other teachers use some of the time for attending professional conferences. Yet very substantial proportions do not use their vacations in this way or in ways connected with staff development. Since there is a growing need for curriculum change, it would seem desirable that greater use should be made of vacation periods for inservice education associated with staff development and curriculum change.

## Student Selection

14.11 At a time when there is a significant oversupply of trained teachers in many areas it is perhaps inevitable that the most competent students from the schools should not elect to enter teaching as a career. However, because there have been considerable reductions in the numbers of students taken into teacher education programs straight from the Year 12 level, it was with some surprise that the Committee noted, in the evidence made available to it, that over the past four years in most of the colleges of advanced education and for all the different types of courses available, there had been quite substantial increases in the proportions of students who had not achieved the matriculation mark standard before embarking on a teacher education program. In 1981, 47 per cent of entrants into teacher education programs in colleges of advanced education had not achieved the matriculation standard. It must be recognized that performance at the matriculation level is not necessarily a strong indicator of achievement in a teacher education program nor of success at a later time in teaching. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a fall in the level of achievement of students being selected to undertake teacher education, and this is clearly of some concern.

14.12 Information was also made available to the Committee on the proportion of students enrolling in the different teacher education programs who had not studied mathematics at the matriculation level. These data are recorded in Table 14.1. It should be noted that approximately half of the students undertaking teacher education in both the primary and secondary level courses had not studied mathematics during their final year of schooling. Of particular significance is the proportion (52 per cent) who were enrolled in primary and junior primary programs who had not studied mathematics at this level, but who would be required to teach mathematics as part of the primary or junior primary school curriculum. The Committee has also noted that with the exception of one of the four colleges engaged in teacher education in South Australia at the primary school level, there were very small proportions of students undertaking other than an absolute minimum amount of mathematics in preparation

Table 14.1 Participation in Mathematics Subjects at Matriculation Examinations in 1979 and 1980 for College of Advanced Education Entrants into Teacher Education Courses in 1981

| Type of Course | Mathematics S (%) | Mathematics 1 and 2(%) | No Mathematics Studied(%) | Number of Students |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Early Childhood Education | 25 | 5 | 70 | 96 |
| Primary and Junior Primary | 38 | 10 | 52 | 225 |
| Physical Education | 54 | 16 | 30 | 50 |
| Secondary (general) | 46 | 8 | 46 | 24 |
| Secondary (science) | 33 | 67 | 0 | 6 |
| Secondary (other) | 27 | 13 | 60 | 88 |
| All Students | 35 | 11 | 54 | 489 |

Source: Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia

for the teaching of mathematics in primary schools. As a consequence, the Committee gained the clear impression that very little emphasis was currently being placed on preparing students to teach primary school mathematics or on guaranteeing that students and graduates had the necessary level of competence to engage in this work. With the evidence that less than half of the entrants into teacher education at the primary school level had had a solid course in mathematics at the terminal school stage, and that relatively few had undertaken a significant mathematics course during teacher education, it now appears essential that the employing authorities should establish standards to be required of entrants into the teaching service at the primary school level.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.4 the Education Department should determine minimum standards of competence in mathematics to be required of those who will in future be employed to teach at the junior primary and primary school levels, in order to guarantee a gradual increase in the quality of the teaching of mathematics at these levels.

14.13 The Committee has noted the very small proportion of students among the 1981 entrants to teacher education programs in colleges of advanced education who were enrolled in science courses (see Table 14.1). It has also learnt of the difficulties encountered in finding replacement teachers during the latter part of a school year to undertake teaching in the areas of mathematics, physics and chemistry. Consequently, in the course of its deliberations it sought to determine whether the colleges of advanced education undertook any investigations into the demand for and supply of teacher education graduates for these subject areas. It appears that appropriate information on the likely demand is not available from the Education Department, partly because in the records held by the Department no information on teacher wastage by subject area is recorded. However, it is clear that the overwhelming number of applicants for teaching positions in science have had their science education in the biological sciences and not the physical sciences or mathematics. Another factor influencing the unavailability of data of this kind is the antiquated methods employed in the recording and processing of the necessary information as the Committee has stated in its first report[7]. Appropriate information on the likely supply is apparently not obtainable because the two universities are also involved in the education of science teachers, and consideration would not appear to be given by them to such matters in the selection of students to enter their courses. It seems that the teaching of science and mathematics in South Australian secondary schools is being placed in jeopardy through a lack of collaboration and planning by the Education Department and the tertiary education institutions. If the State is to maintain its previously high level of teaching of mathematics and science and is to be in a position to embark on programs of technological development as would seem necessary if the prosperity of the State is to be maintained, then it is clearly essential that there should be more teaching of a higher quality in these subjects in South Australian secondary schools. It was evident to the Committee that no consideration was being given to these issues, although it is common knowledge that serious problems have now been encountered elsewhere in Australia and in Britain through a failure to plan in appropriate ways. We do not wish to suggest that the teaching of these subjects in South Australian secondary schools has reached a crisis stage. Nevertheless, we note signs of a lack of preparedness to ensure that problems do not arise in the future.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.5 the Education Department in collaboration with the tertiary education institutions should undertake systematic planning to ensure an adequate supply of specialist teachers in all subject areas, but particularly in mathematics and the physical sciences, to work in the secondary schools.

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[7] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981, op. cit., p.15-18.

## The Induction of Beginning Teachers

14.14 The Committee has examined the recommendations of the Report of the South Australian Enquiry into Teacher Education[8] and the recently stated policy of the Education Department on the induction of beginning teachers into the teaching service[9], and endorses the principles embodied in these statements. However, it notes that a beginning teacher passes through a period of probation as determined by the Teachers Registration Board. During this probationary period the beginning teacher is classified as a provisionally registered teacher. It is clearly necessary to establish a system that would ensure that beginning teachers holding provisional registration were adequately assessed before change of status to full registration was approved. Not only is it essential that the beginning teacher should be identified as competent or not competent through a process of assessment, but it is also important that the induction process should be designed in such a way that it provides the beginning teacher with assistance in diagnosing both strengths and weaknesses. This could be accomplished if an evaluation component was built into the induction process that would require the practice of continuous evaluation of the beginning teacher, so that both the teacher being evaluated and the person responsible for the induction could see whether or not professional growth had occurred during the induction period. However, this continuous evaluation should be consciously separated from the assessment process with the former taking preference and assuming greater significance to both the beginning teacher and the person responsible for the induction program. The Teachers Registration Board is developing procedures along the lines summarized above, although the administration of these must rest with the employer. However, there are certain problems for those who begin their teaching career with a limited term appointment as is now extremely common. Under these circumstances extension of a limited term appointment is inextricably linked with assessment for full registration. Clearly it will be necessary for the Teachers Registration Board to investigate different strategies before determining procedures that should apply for persons on contract or permanent initial appointments. It is also essential that a beginning teacher on a contract appointment should experience a fully effective induction program.

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[8] Committee of Enquiry into Teacher Education in South Australia, 1980. op. cit., Chapter 11.

[9] South Australia, Education Department. Induction, Development and Probation of Newly Appointed Teachers: Policies and Procedures. Adelaide: Government Printer, 1981.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R14.6 the Teachers Registration Board should develop guidelines for schools to ensure that all beginning teachers experience an effective induction program prior to assessment for conversion of their status of provisional registration to full registration, and that only those who are assessed to be competent by their employer be classified as fully registered.

It would be inappropriate for the Teachers Registration Board to develop guidelines that did not take into full consideration the valuable policies and procedures recently introduced into the schools of the Education Department of South Australia. Moreover, it will be necessary for some form of inservice training in teacher supervision and evaluation procedures to be made available to Principals and other staff of schools who supervise beginning teachers during the induction period.

## The Incompetent Teacher

14.15 The problem remains of how to deal with the relatively few cases of incompetence that currently exist in the teaching service in South Australian schools and colleges of technical and further education. While increasing use is being made of contract appointments, a strategy which is only possible when there is a substantial oversupply of teachers, the great majority of assistant teachers, teachers in promotion positions and school principals hold permanent appointments. However, there are some limited numbers of school Principals holding contract appointments, and this policy seems to be considered appropriate and to work successfully for persons holding these senior positions. The Committee in its first report made some proposals that it considered would assist in dealing with incompetent members of staff. The issue is seen as one of management of staff and not one that should be passed over by the schools and colleges to another body such as the Teachers Registration Board. The Committee suggested that trial use should be made of a teacher counsellor, who could provide advice of a more personal nature to teachers who were under stress in schools[10]. Advice of a more professional nature is clearly a responsibility of the Principal, the Head of a Department in a larger school and of the regional office staff. The Committee also recommended that the promotion structure of the teaching service should be changed in order to

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[10] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.15-31.

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allow the local specification of promotion positions and the selection of persons to be appointed to these positions, and should necessarily include the introduction of limited tenure appointments for such promotion positions[11]. Furthermore, the Committee recommended that new staffing policies should be developed in relation to the use of contract appointments in clearly specified circumstances[12]. Similar proposals could be made for the staffing of the colleges of technical and further education. These policies, if wisely and carefully used, would allow greater flexibility in the future. From our subsequent discussions, three important points emerge. First, greater care should be taken to ensure that only those beginning teachers or lecturers who could confidently be expected to become thoroughly competent teachers should be permitted to enter the permanent teaching service and to obtain full registration as teachers. Secondly, those teachers or lecturers advanced to promotion positions should recognize that, while their employment as a teacher would generally not be in doubt, whether or not they held a particular promotion position at a particular level would always be a matter to be reconsidered after an assessment of their performance and the availability of an appropriate position. Should they be removed from a particular promotion position, there should normally be a fall-back position, with a lower salary level and with a lower degree of responsibility at which they might work. Thirdly, for teachers and lecturers whose level of performance in schools and colleges was below a level that might be expected, there must always be procedures established by which they would be helped and if necessary warned before action was taken, as is clearly possible under Section 26 of the Education Act, 1972.

14.16 It is necessary that greater consideration should be given to the use of this Section of the Education Act, to the development of appropriate procedures to be employed, and to the systematic documentation of the steps taken within schools and regional offices in dealing with incompetent teachers. The use of this Section of the Education Act will always be an unpleasant task, but it is clearly a managerial responsibility of the Education Department, and indeed the Principals of all schools, to ensure that incompetent assistant teachers are identified and disciplinary action taken. Under certain circumstances the Director-General may recommend to the Minister of Education that an officer of the Education Department should be dismissed from the teaching service. If the grounds for dismissal involve gross incompetence or disgraceful or improper conduct, it would seem appropriate that the officer

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[11] ibid. p.15-32. Recommendation R15.4.
[12] ibid. p.15-33. Recommendation R15.5.

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should also have his registration as a teacher cancelled as is possible under Section 65 of the Education Act. However, appropriate provisions do not exist within the Education Act for the Education Department or for the Principal of a school to be required to submit evidence to the Teachers Registration Board in all cases of dismissal that involve gross incompetence or disgraceful or improper conduct. In addition, it would seem necessary for the Teachers Registration Board to be able under the Education Act to appoint an Investigating Officer, who would have the right to enter schools and make enquiries on behalf of the Board. Without such evidence submitted to it by the Education Department or the Principal of a school, and without an Investigating Officer available to obtain evidence, the Teachers Registration Board would appear to be in the unfortunate position that it is unable to identify teachers who should be under consideration for cancellation of registration. Furthermore, under Section 63 of the Education Act the obligation rests with the individual teacher to obtain registration. There would appear to be no obligation on the employing authority, either the Education Department or the School Council of a non-government school, to ensure that only registered persons were in their employment as teachers. As a consequence the Teachers Registration Board has found that there are a significant number of teachers who have failed to obtain registration.

14.17 The issues discussed above are of concern to the Committee because it sees that an effective Teachers Registration Board ensures protection of the public against malpractice and incompetence in the teaching service. However, the Committee has not sought to make recommendations on these matters. Nevertheless, it would wish to emphasize that the school Principal and the employer, whether associated with a government or a non-government school, has a managerial responsibility not only to the institution that is served but also to all other educational institutions in the country and to the wider public.

# CHAPTER 15

# CONDITIONS IN THE TEACHING SERVICE

## Problems Arising from Enrolment Decline

15.1 In spite of declining enrolments over the years 1977 to 1980, the size of the teaching service has remained static, and as a consequence the overall pupil-teacher ratio for South Australian schools has continued to fall[1]. The projections are for a continuing decline in primary school enrolments over the five years to 1987, and a subsequent gradual rise, while there will be a general falling in secondary school enrolments throughout the decade.[2] While there is the possibility of increases at the junior primary level and at the Year 12 level, if the changes in policy and practice advocated by the Committee are implemented, these possible increases would not be of sufficient magnitude to counter the fall in numbers that is projected. Consequently, it is of some interest to examine, as far as is possible, the structure of the teaching service in South Australian schools and to consider some of the problems created for the teaching service as a result of the predicted decline in enrolments. Of particular interest are the opportunities for promotion within the teaching service as mobility in and out of the service has been greatly reduced by a lack of employment in other fields. In addition, at a time of a demand by women for a greater level of participation in senior management in schools and in the central and regional offices, it is of some concern that the lack of opportunities for promotion will continue to deny women, in particular, the chance to obtain management positions in the educational service.

15.2 The Committee in its first report drew attention to the problems referred to in the previous paragraph and advocated that as a matter of some urgency the promotion structure of the teaching service should be changed to accommodate local specifications of positions and local selection of appointees. In addition it was proposed that there should be an introduction of limited tenure appointments for promotion positions[3]. At the present time, the structure of the teaching service is such that there is a total lack of flexibility at the school level to cope with the decline in enrolments and the changes that the Committee believes should occur as a consequence of proposed changes to the curriculum. While the Education Department has sought to handle the problems associated with transfers of teachers from metropolitan to rural regions to increase its flexibility of administration, it would not appear to have attempted to resolve some of the problems which were raised by the Committee in its first report. Already the Committee believes there is a significant over-supply of teachers in promotion positions who cannot be effectively located in schools and must thus be paid allowances for duties that, according to regulations associated with the size and the type of school, they do not need to perform. The Committee recognizes that the problems of management of a service of in excess of 15,000 persons is a very substantial task, particularly since each of the 600 and more schools has unique characteristics and different requirements. Nevertheless, without far greater flexibility in administration and without a greater degree of management devolved to individual schools and the 10 regional offices, it would appear that the task might well become an impossible one.

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[1] See Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.15-2.

[2] ibid. p.3-2.

[3] ibid. p.15-32.

## The Classification System for Teachers

15.3 It is necessary to examine the general classification system of promotion positions which exists in the South Australian teaching service in comparison with that existing across the rest of Australia, to determine whether the administrative structure provided for South Australian schools is equivalent to that which occurs elsewhere in Australia. Furthermore, such an examination of the system of classification used, together with the proportions of the teaching service occupying each category, could provide some indication of whether or not anomalies exist in the South Australian system that are of consequence, and need to be taken into consideration in the future. In Table 15.1 the percentages of teachers occupying classified positions in the South Australian Education Department in August 1979 are compared with those occupying similar positions in the other educational systems in Australia. The data recorded refer to those teachers classified as employed in general teaching and school administration. School support teachers such as teacher-librarians and remedial teachers for whom a classification was not available have been excluded, as are pre-school teachers and teachers in special schools. However, the Victorian data include some teachers who are working in the area of technical and further education because such teachers are included in the Victorian Education Department's statistics. The information recorded in Table 15.1 is of considerable interest because it indicates that at the primary school level the proportions of teachers holding positions of Principal and Deputy Principal in South Australia are only slightly greater than those proportions that occur in other parts of Australia. However, the proportion of teachers who hold other promotion positions in South Australia is well below that for other parts of the country. There is clear evidence of a lack of promotional opportunities

Table 15.1 Proportions of Teachers in Classified Positions in South Australia and Australian State Educational Systems, August 1979[a]

| Percentage Recorded | Primary | | Secondary | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Classification Position | South Australia | Australia | South Australia | Australia |
| Principal | 8.1 | 7.0 | 1.5 | 1.8 |
| Deputy Principal | 4.9 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 2.2 |
| Other Promotion Position | 1.2 | 10.5 | 21.5 | 15.5 |
| Assistant | 85.8 | 78.8 | 73.1 | 80.6 |

Note: [a] Data refer to teachers engaged in general teaching and school administration excluding special schools and teachers for whom a classification was not provided in the listed services.

Sources: Commonwealth Schools Commission and Annual Reports of the Education Departments.

within the primary school teaching service of South Australia for teachers prior to their holding the positions of Principal and Deputy Principal. As a result the proportion of teachers holding appointments in the category of assistant teacher is substantially greater than in other parts of Australia. At the secondary school level a reverse situation is found. The proportion of teachers in the assistant category in South Australia is significantly lower than in other parts of Australia. The proportion holding the position of Principal in secondary schools in South Australia is similar to but below that in other States, probably as a consequence of slightly fewer small secondary schools in South Australia. However, the proportions holding appointments in the categories of Deputy Principal and other promotion positions are substantially greater than in other parts of Australia.

15.4 It is evident that as enrolments start to decline in secondary schools a situation will quickly develop in which there are sizeable numbers of deputy principals and teachers in other promotion positions who cannot be accommodated effectively within the teaching service. However, the same problems are not likely to be as acute at the primary school level. It would seem desirable that a complete restructuring of the classification of teachers in the South Australian Education Department is warranted. The new structure should aim to eliminate the anomalies recorded and discussed above, where South Australian teachers are involved in a classification system that is at opposite extremes relative to the other Australian States at the primary and secondary school levels. A more detailed examination of proportions in the different promotion categories in the seven Australian education systems would confirm this claim. Consideration could well be given to the classification system that has been

Table 15.2 Proportion of Classified Positions Held by Women in South Australian and Australian State Educational Systems, August 1979

| Percentage Recorded | Primary | | Secondary | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Classification Position | South Australia | Australia | South Australia | Australia |
| Principal | 18 | 10 | 13 | 9 |
| Deputy Principal | 27 | 27 | 28 | 20 |
| Other Promotion Positions | 74[a] | 46 | 24 | 22 |
| Assistants | 78 | 77 | 50 | 48 |
| All Teachers | 71 | 68 | 43 | 43 |

Note: [a] The total number of teachers in this category was small.

Sources: Commonwealth Schools Commission and Annual Reports of the Education Departments.
Data for the New South Wales Education Department were not available for 1979 and data from 1977 were used. Tasmania has been excluded because data were not separately available for primary and secondary positions.

introduced in the Commonwealth Teaching Service for the Australian Capital Territory and that would appear to provide a more balanced promotion system than the one which currently operates in the primary schools, and a less liberal system than the one currently existing in secondary schools of South Australia.

## Women in Classification Positions

15.5 It is of some interest to examine the proportion of classified positions that are held by women at both the primary and secondary school levels. The relevant information for comparisons between South Australia and the rest of Australia is recorded in Table 15.2. It should be noted that the proportions of women in the teaching service at both primary and secondary school levels in South Australia correspond closely to the Australian averages. Whether it is desirable to have such a high proportion of women in the teaching service at the primary school level as approximately 70 per cent is open to question, although this probably represents the fact that the junior primary grades are largely the domain of women teachers and an even balance exists between the sexes in the primary grades. Perhaps approximately equal proportions might be expected in secondary schools and, if this were so, then women would appear to be slightly under-represented at this level. It should be noted that there are few teachers in South Australian primary schools in the category of other promotion positions and thus the proportion of women teachers in this category in comparison with the rest of Australia is of little consequence. In general, at the primary school level women hold positions of Principal in greater proportions in South Australia than in other parts of Australia. This must be assumed to be related to the continued existence of junior primary schools in South Australia and to the fact that women invariably are holding these positions. If the number of junior primary schools in South Australia were to decrease as a result of a decline in total enrolments, then these appointments would no longer be available as promotion positions for women. Under such circumstances it would appear to be desirable to maintain in larger primary schools a position of Deputy Principal Junior Primary and thus to increase gradually the numbers of women who would be available for promotion to the position of Principal in primary schools. At the secondary school level, South Australian schools have a substantially greater proportion of women currently holding the position of Deputy Principal than in most other States, and a slightly greater proportion than in other States at present occupying other promotion positions. Nevertheless, it is clear from the evidence presented that there is a lack of equality existing in practice for women in the teaching service to hold positions of responsibility in schools not only in South Australia but across Australia. Whether this is a consequence of the procedures used for making appointments to promotion positions, or a general wish on the part of women of competence in the teaching service not to seek promotion appointments is unclear. However, it is clear that with declining enrolments and without change in the classification system it will be very difficult for women in the teaching service in South Australia to obtain promotion appointments in the foreseeable future.

## Women in the Administration

15.6 No evidence was available to the Committee on the number of women in senior administrative positions in the Education Department or the Department of Technical and Further Education and in other systems across Australia that would enable effective comparison to be made. Perhaps evidence of this kind is not needed because the present position is all too clear in both Departments; there are few women in senior administrative positions. The reasons for this, however, are not clear, and the present situation would seem to warrant careful examination.

15.7 The two major issues that have been considered in this chapter, so far, are inter-related. Without a restructuring of the classification system of the Education Department, the provision of a greater degree of flexibility through the use of contract appointments, and the establishment of holding positions which are available to persons who formerly occupied a promotion position, but whose position of responsibility no longer exists, it would seem almost impossible for effective management of the system to occur at a time of significant decline in enrolments. Furthermore, unless there is a freeing up of promotion positions of some form, then it is likely to prove extremely difficult for more women teachers in South Australian schools to move into positions of responsibility during the coming decade. The Committee has discussed in its first report the need for the local specification of promotion positions by a Principal of a school and the school council, in collaboration with the regional administration, and the selection of teachers to fill those positions by means of procedures over which school Principals, school councils and the regional administration have some control. There is a growing need for schools, particularly at the upper secondary school level, to undertake new initiatives, and Principals and their school councils will find it almost impossible to introduce change unless they are able to specify the type of teaching staff they require and select appropriate staff to fill these positions.

15.8 The Committee has noted from the submissions that it has received and from its visits to schools that situations have arisen recently in which conflict has developed between school councils, and the teaching staff, particularly those members of staff holding promotion positions. To deny school councils the right to enter into the affairs of a school to the extent that they are able to share in the selection of the Principal of a school, and to deny them the right of effective protest and the possibility of effective action in situations where the Principal and the teaching staff are not meeting the needs of the students, is to reduce the function of the school council to that of merely providing additional resources for the school. In situations of conflict between the school council and the Principal and staff of a school, the Regional Director has an extremely important role to play and the Committee commends the manner in which it has seen Regional Directors handle such problems, noting that it would be extremely difficult to achieve satisfactory resolution from a central office. It is clear, however, that school councils will increasingly become the mechanisms by which the community will seek to influence the policies and practices of a school to ensure that the school is meeting the needs of the students from the community served by the school. The tensions that will inevitably develop occasionally between school councils and the teaching service must be accepted as necessary conditions for the improvement of educational provision.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R15.1 (a) the promotion structure of the teaching service at both primary and secondary school levels should be changed significantly to create new types of promotion positions, particularly at the primary school level;

(b) procedures employed in the appointment of teachers to promotion positions should be substantially modified to allow for both local specification of positions and local selection of persons to fill those positions to ensure that appropriate appointments are made;

(c) limited tenure appointments should be made to promotion positions;

(d) holding positions should be specified that teaching staff who have formerly occupied a specific position in a school should revert to when the position that they hold becomes redundant, or when their period of limited tenure to a promotion position expires;

(e) procedures should be developed that permit women to be eligible for promotion without the condition of unbroken service; and

(f) consideration should be given to ways of encouraging more women to accept positions of management and responsibility within the educational service not only in schools, but also in the administrative area.

## Conditions of Employment of Teachers and Lecturers

15.9 In its first report, the Committee noted that teachers' salaries were determined in awards made by the Teachers Salaries Board, while the South Australian Industrial Commission had responsibility for determining conditions of employment.[4] The Committee recommended that in future all awards associated with both the salaries and conditions of employment of teaching staff of the Education Department and lecturing staff of the Department of Further Education should be determined by one body - which the Committee at that time recommended should be the Teachers Salaries Board.

15.10 Since the presentation of its first report, however, the Committee has noted that a number of industrial issues concerning education staff have been the subject of attention in the Industrial Commission, most notably the School Assistants dispute. This dispute has centred on the conditions of employment of school assistants, with its focus on the power of the employer to vary the number of hours worked by school assistants. There is no denying the fact that school assistants have become an integral resource in the staffing of schools, and it is essential that any process of determination of their salaries and conditions of employment should be closely linked to that involved in the determination of teachers' salaries and conditions of employment. Parallel arguments can be invoked in the field of pre-school education.

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[4] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp 15-16 to 15-17.

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15.11 The Committee is deeply concerned with the anomaly that exists whereby one industrial tribunal determines salaries whilst another tribunal determines in respect of conditions of employment. The Committee believes that there is an indissoluble linkage between salaries and conditions of employment regardless of the nature of the occupational group considered, and it would reiterate its stand that one tribunal should be given jurisdiction over all aspects of salary determination and the associated conditions of employment of teaching and lecturing staff in the Education Department, the Department of Technical and Further Education, and in the Kindergarten Union. The question then arises as to which industrial tribunal should be given the responsibility for determining on salaries and conditions of employment of these staff. The Committee, as noted above, originally favoured an extension of the powers of the Teachers Salaries Board to enable it to determine on conditions of employment. However, in reviewing that recommendation, the Committee now sees a future wherein complex industrial problems are likely to emerge in respect of conditions of employment, particularly if a number of the recommendations advanced in this second report of the Committee are implemented by the Government. The Committee can foresee the need for an industrial tribunal with members having wide experience in many facets of industrial negotiation, backed up with adequate resources to permit a detailed examination of the industrial issues likely to emerge.

15.12 The comparatively small size of the Teachers Salaries Board and the limited resources available to it would mean that in future it would have such a workload placed on it that the complex industrial issues either would not be adequately examined, or the examinations would drag on for such an extended period of time that the parties involved in the negotiation would become frustrated to the extent of precipitating a breakdown in the negotiation process with consequent disruption to the delivery of educational services. Part of the present strife may be attributed to the prolonged industrial negotiations currently underway. The alleviation of these problems might rest with an expansion of the resources available to the Teachers Salaries Board, and changes to its size and composition. However, the Committee is mindful that there already exist two industrial tribunals in the State that have powers such as the Committee advocates, the S.A. Industrial Commission and the S.A. Public Service Board. Both bodies are well staffed to provide the resources necessary to examine complex industrial issues. Both tribunals have members with a breadth of experience in industrial issues.

15.13 The Committee considered the possibility that the Public Service Board, rather than an expanded Teachers Salaries Board, should have responsibility for determining salaries and conditions of employment of teachers and lecturers. The Public Service Board already determines salaries for a number of staff in positions which involve close and detailed liaison with teaching and lecturing staff. That liaison could be a significant consideration in salary determination processes, and it could be argued that, as the Public Service Board has the responsibility at present for determining salaries and conditions of employment of many staff in the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education, it should also assume the responsibility for determining salaries and conditions of employment of teachers and lecturers. The persuasive force of that argument can be added to when it is considered that the Public Service Board has industrial determination powers for a wide range of public service staff who possess qualifications similar in period of study to that required of teachers and lecturers.

15.14 The Committee does not, however, favour the vesting in the Public Service Board the responsibility for determining salaries and conditions of teachers and lecturers. First, in those States where the Public Service Board has this power, a high level of dissatisfaction with the system has developed in teachers' unions with the system. It would be unfortunate for South Australia's educational system if that dissatisfaction were to emerge in this State. Secondly, the Public Service Boards must inevitably have regard to the consequences of any decisions affecting one group of public service employees and the flow-over effects into other occupational groups in the service. The multiplicative effects of salary decisions for one group of public servants can result in Governments being faced with a general salary movement for all public servants, so that Public Service Boards by and large must adopt a cautious, and even conservative, approach to their salary decision-making processes. Recent examples in South Australia can be cited in respect of Research Officers in the Education Department and Superintendents and Directors in both the Education Department and the Department of Further Education. In the latter case, the industrial negotiations have finally ended up before the Full Bench of the South Australian Industrial Commission.

15.15 While the numbers of officers affected in both these cases were small, and no industrial disruption has occurred, the same could not be anticipated in a situation where the Public Service Board might have to deal with 15,000 teachers and 1,300 lecturing staff. Such a situation involving these staff in extended negotiations with a Public Service Board would inevitably lead to industrial tension with the prospect of significantly greater industrial disputation and disruption to the State's educational system. Finally, the dual role of Public Service Boards in determining both staffing establishments and salaries and conditions of employment has led to a position wherein staff unions often perceive the Public Service Board as simply an extended arm of the State Government. In periods of limited resources where governments are seeking to contain public expenditure, unions are becoming increasingly reluctant to accept the traditional independence of a Public Service Board from the State Government.

15.16 Thus the Committee is brought around to a consideration of whether the appropriate tribunal for determining both salaries and conditions of employment of teachers, lecturers and school assistants is either an expanded Teachers Salaries Board or the existing South Australian Industrial Commission. The Committee is persuaded that any industrial tribunal has to have a breadth of expertise in its membership and sufficient depth of supporting resources to be able to examine in detail the merits of every case considering teachers' and lecturers' salaries and conditions of service. However, there is another important consideration placed upon industrial tribunals determining in these matters - that is the necessity for the tribunal to have regard to the economic impact upon the State of its industrial decisions. The State provides the major source of funds for education, and any increases in salaries and/or conditions of employment of education staff have to be borne, by and large, by the State. The Committee believes that the South Australian Industrial Commission is better placed than an expanded Teachers Salaries Board to assess the impact upon the State of decisions made in respect of educational staff. The Commission is always required to perform that assessment in the multiplicity of awards over which it presently has determining powers. It has the support services and breadth of experience in its membership that place it in a better position than an expanded Teachers Salaries Board to make those complex assessments. Moreover, it has a repository of experience in dealing with complex industrial issues arising in consideration of conditions of employment. Many present industrial issues in the educational field are being handled by the Commission.

15.17 Thus this Committee has reconsidered its previous recommendation that the Teachers Salaries Board should have responsibility for determining both the salaries and conditions of employment of teachers and lecturers and the Committee would wish to retract that recommendation.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R15.2 (a) the Education Act and Further Education Acts should be amended to secure the abolition of the Teachers Salaries Board;

(b) the South Australian Industrial Commission should be regarded as the authority responsible for determining on both salaries and conditions of employment of all staff presently covered by awards of the Teachers Salaries Board; and

(c) the salaries and conditions of employment of school assistants and aides should be determined by the South Australian Industrial Commission under provisions contained within an amended Education Act and, where appropriate, an amended Technical and Further Education Act.

## The Training of Staff

15.18 The Committee sees a need for a greater degree of financial management at the school level. This will require the training of staff to work in schools on financial matters relevant to the conduct of educational institutions as well as the preparation of school councils to take a greater interest in such questions. At the administrative levels in the education sector, there would appear to be a pressing need for the appointment of both educators with specific training in financial management, and persons from outside education who have had specific training in the area of financial control of organizations. Unfortunately there are few courses specifically directed towards the financial needs of schools available in the State for persons preparing to undertake duties in this area. Likewise in the fields of evaluation and curriculum development, at both the school and administrative levels there is an urgent need for appropriately trained persons. In addition, as far as the Committee could determine, little provision is made for components of courses concerned with evaluation and curriculum development in the courses provided in initial teacher education, and only a limited number of courses at the post-graduate level. Thus while moves have been made for the introduction of school based curriculum development, with a strong thrust in this direction being advanced by the former Curriculum Development Centre from Canberra, it has been extremely difficult for schools to sustain the thrust in South Australia because of a lack of expertise amongst teachers. This criticism should not be interpreted to imply that all work undertaken in the field of curriculum development in schools and within the Curriculum Directorate has been faulty or misdirected, but merely to suggest that there has not been a high enough level of general competence for widespread programs to be sustained, or for a high level of productivity in this area to emerge. Apart from the area of school evaluation, the Committee was unable to detect an awareness of the problems of student evaluation and assessment, curriculum evaluation based on student learning, system evaluation, or knowledge of how such work might be best accomplished, in the discussions that it held and the submissions that it received. In general, it must be assumed that there is a low level of expertise in the schools of South Australia in these areas. However, the Committee recognized that expertise had been built up in the area of school evaluation as a consequence of some valuable work that has been undertaken in recent years by the Directorate of Research and Planning. The Committee commends this work but questions the utility of much of it because the findings from such studies are not being made sufficiently widely available to school councils, the regional offices and the central administration who have a responsibility to assist schools to improve their performance as educational institutions. The Committee would envisage that in future when teaching staff were being appointed to promotion positions in schools which would involve responsibility for financial management, there would be some expectation that applicants had received the training necessary for such work. Likewise, when teaching staff were being appointed to Principal and Deputy Principal positions with responsibility for the school curriculum, it would be necessary for them to have undertaken some training in the fields of curriculum development and evaluation. The undertaking of such training should not be assumed to be associated with increased skill or higher duties, and hence with a higher level of salary, but rather with the acquisition of the necessary skills for the work required within the schools. Likewise, in the appointment of professional officers to administrative positions or to positions in the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation evidence of appropriate training and expertise would clearly be required.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R15.3 (a) staff employed in schools in promotion positions involving responsibility for financial management, evaluation and curriculum development should have undergone training and possess expertise that would enable them to carry out their duties effectively;

(b) staff employed in administrative positions involving financial management should be expected to have received special training and to possess expertise in the financial aspects of administration at the professional and paraprofessional levels as appropriate;

(c) professional staff employed in the Directorate of Curriculum Research, Development and Evaluation should be expected to have received training and to possess expertise in curriculum development, evaluation or research; and

(d) such training and expertise as referred to above should be seen as the necessary pre-requisites for undertaking such work and not necessarily grounds for receiving a higher level of remuneration.

# CHAPTER 16

# THE USE OF LIMITED RESOURCES

## Introduction

16.1 As previously pointed out expenditure on education is the largest single item in the State Budget. It is clear, as we have indicated in the first report of this Committee, there has been a substantial and necessary increase in spending by the State and Commonwealth Governments on all forms of education over the past decade. As a consequence an expectation exists in the educational community that this increase in expenditure will continue. However, there are growing pressures arising in the community to question the level of expenditure on education and to raise doubts as to whether value for money is being received from what is already being provided for education. In the future in all areas of education there must be an emphasis on the efficient use of resources, rather than a continuing increase in the funds made available for educational purposes. At a time when it is necessary for the State Government to provide financial incentives for the development of commerce and industry within the State, it must be expected that moneys will only be made available for those purposes through containing expenditure in other areas of government service delivery including education.

16.2 It is important to recognize that there is an increasing demand for trained personnel with a high level of developed skills in the areas of advanced technology and the trades, and that it is encumbent on the educational system to provide that training. A related problem arises from the marked fall in employment opportunities for youth who lack the skills and experience necessary for the jobs that are available in the workforce. Moreover, it is becoming clear that the problems of youth unemployment are not short term problems that will disappear as the national economy improves, but are likely to remain for the foreseeable future as is the case in other highly industrialized countries. The Committee has identified a range of areas where more relevant or increased educational services will be required over the next decade. These include an expansion of the educational components of early childhood programs for children from birth to four years, more relevant programs at the upper secondary level and increased programs relevant to new technology and the trades. If these improvements are to be achieved without an increase in the funds available for education, and perhaps with declining funds in real terms, then substantial change is necessary to the present pattern of resource usage. Either resources will have to be reallocated from programs of lower priority to higher priority needs or greater contributions will have to be made by students, parents and employers towards the costs of educational services. Realistically, a combination of both of these actions may be necessary.

## Contributions by Students, Parents and Employers

16.3 If greater contributions are to be made towards the costs of education then the major issue is who should contribute and how much should be asked of them at the different stages of education and for different programs. The Committee endorses in principle the concept that the costs of those educational services, which are essential for all members of the community to obtain or to have access to, should be borne principally from general taxation revenues rather than by imposing substantial fees on students and their parents. While this concept appears to have been generally accepted by the State and Commonwealth Governments in determining educational policies, its application has in practice become confused and marked disparities have emerged in the level of public resources devoted to individuals. For example, on the one hand, the Committee has already noted with concern that girls who seek full-time training in secretarial studies and who live in the metropolitan area must pay substantial fees to attend a secretarial training institution. On the other hand, the Committee notes the outcry that has occurred when those who are currently already in employment are being asked to pay fees to enable them to attend universities and colleges of advanced education for the purposes of undertaking post-graduate and higher degree educational programs. Within the field of technical and further education the Committee has noted the difficulties which arise in establishing the purposes for which many people are pursuing post-secondary studies and in determining whether they should be admitted to free or fee-paying programs. In this respect the present policy on fees is rigid and there is scope for more flexible pricing policies, particularly if a wider range of technical and further education programs is to be developed without excessive drain on government funds.

16.4 The Committee is less concerned, at this time, with the fact that some students attending non-government schools have to pay substantial fees to attend schools of their choice. It is clear from the evidence available to the Committee that in some non-government schools, because of the high level of subsidy now being received from both State and Commonwealth sources, fees are being charged that are little greater than the contributions sought from parents whose children attend neighbouring government schools. At the same time, there are commonly significant proportions of students whose fees are waived to enable them to attend certain non-government schools. However, during recent years the level of voluntary fees sought for attendance at government schools has been increasing. Although there is a voluntary element associated with these fees, the pressure on parents to meet them is substantial. While it is generally recognized that parents should make a contribution of this nature consistent with their capacity to afford this payment, the Committee is concerned that there is no clearly understood and accepted Government policy on the future of parental contributions.

16.5 The consequences of policies requiring substantial contributions from students and their parents towards the education received are that, while a wider range of services can be offered, those who can afford to pay, in general, have greater access to the services than those who are unable to pay. Furthermore, the thrust of educational provision across the world as well as in Australia, during the past decade, has been directed towards meeting the educational needs of students who come from educationally deprived and disadvantaged home backgrounds. Commonly, but not necessarily, these students and their parents lack the financial resources to obtain a higher standard of living. Thus the Committee endorses to the full the emphasis of the Disadvantaged Schools Program of the Commonwealth Schools Commission and those programs of a similar kind that make special and additional provision for students with some form of handicap and disadvantage. Nevertheless, it is important to note that programs of this kind that endeavour to provide greater equality of educational opportunity do not resolve the many disparities that currently exist in educational provision, and that can dilute the initiatives of many communities to provide adequate support for their schools.

16.6 The Committee recognizes that there are important equity considerations that are frequently not raised in educational debate associated with the marked disparities in the level of public resources assigned for the education of different individuals. As a result the policies on provision of resources to educational programs throughout the total education sector give the impression of a fairly disjointed accumulation of past resource decisions without a coherent set of guiding principles and policies. While the Committee has addressed many related issues in this report it does not have the capacity or scope within its terms of reference to undertake the major rethinking of the policies on resource provision and on the charging of fees that is required. Such a study would necessarily embrace the influence of Commonwealth Government funding on State Government policies.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.1 the State Government should initiate a fundamental review of resource policies for various educational services and programs including the appropriate levels of student, parent and employer contributions to the costs of these services.

## Corporate Planning in Education

16.7 There are large numbers of important resource management issues facing educational decision makers in this State. These issues range from the broad policy questions associated with equality of educational opportunity and equity considerations across educational levels and social groups to highly specific and practical questions such as those concerned with the sale of property that has become redundant. Some of these issues were raised by the Committee in its first report and directed towards the more efficient use of resources at particular levels of education. Some such issues have been considered by the Public Accounts Committee of the South Australian Parliament, and that Committee also advanced specific recommendations. In our first report we sought to create new mechanisms to facilitate policy making across the whole field of education on a co-ordinated basis, that we as a Committee believed would lead to greater restraint in educational spending and a more efficient use of resources. It is with some dismay that we note that the proposals of this Committee and the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee have been opposed by many within the educational sector. It is clear that in making recommendations concerned with the use of limited resources the Committee needed to be more specific, and perhaps more direct in the solutions it recommended. As a consequence it continues to endorse, in principle, the need for an Educational Policy and Priorities Executive, but it becomes increasingly apparent that the existence of such an Executive would make little difference while the information necessary for effective decision-making was unavailable. The Committee believes that only by bringing representatives of both the Public Service Board and the Treasury into the decision making processes in education, not as opponents in a bargaining operation but as partners in the discussion and debate on educational policy issues, will greater restraint be observed and more efficient use of resources be achieved. Moreover, the Committee now recognizes the problems associated with the involvement of the Minister of Education in the corporate decision making process in the educational sector as chairman of the Educational Policy and Priorities Executive, since he alone must be responsible to the State Parliament for the decisions taken.

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Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.2 (a) the Educational Policy and Priorities Executive should be established comprising the heads of the major administrative units in the education portfolio together with representatives of the Public Service Board and the State Treasury to provide an effective corporate approach to the planning and delivery of educational services in the State; and

(b) the Educational Policy and Priorities Executive should be chaired by the Executive Director of the Office of the Ministry of Education.

## The Effects of Decline in Numbers on Recurrent Expenditure

16.8 As we have shown in the first report of this Committee a very substantial decline in government school enrolments must be anticipated over the next decade. In spite of the views presented to the contrary, the Committee sees no valid reason why there should not be a corresponding decline in the numbers of staff employed in the schools at all levels, together with a fall in the numbers employed on administrative duties. However, the Committee notes that, while a significant decrease in the numbers of staff in administrative positions has been taking place in recent years, there is little acceptance of the need for a substantial fall to take place in the numbers of staff engaged in school duties. Indeed there is widespread expectation of a continuing fall in the pupil-teacher ratio, in classroom contact time for teachers, and in class sizes. The Committee notes the very substantial falls that have occurred during the past decade and raises the question whether further change in the same direction is likely to yield benefits that are commensurate with the costs incurred. Furthermore, the Committee notes the statement recently made by Emeritus Professor P. Karmel:

> Examples of structural rigidities within the educational system are not hard to find; two major examples will suffice. In schools, class size has become a sacred cow and pressures for reductions in pupil-teacher ratios have continued in spite of great improvements over the past decade. It may well be that a more effective use of resources would require a trade-off between classroom teachers and special teachers to assist disadvantaged groups or ancillary staff of various kinds, or even a trade-off between primary and secondary teachers. The latest wisdom is that, although very small class size is an effective pedagogic device, small changes in the class sizes which commonly obtain do not produce significant effects[1]. If this is correct, there may be a strong case for allowing the size of most classes to rise a little so that special groups of children may be taught in very small classes. Such a move would certainly

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[1] See Glass, G.V. and Smith, M.L. Meta Aalysis of Research on the Relationship of Class-size and Achievement. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education, 1978.

> bring what is educationally desirable into conflict with teacher attitudes[2].

The Committee raised the question of the use of small groups for remedial instruction in its first report, where it recognized the particular needs of certain groups of students for more intensive teaching[3]. Nevertheless, it sees very limited benefits arising from further reductions in the pupil-teacher ratio at a time when there are more urgent needs in other areas of education. The major issue for schools in South Australia is not one of permitting a small increase in class-sizes for ordinary students and so to divert resources to the education of special groups, however desirable this may be, but rather one of stemming or even reversing the tide of further decreases in class-size and pupil-teacher ratios, in order to make resources available for other purposes of high priority in the provision of education in the State. The Committee in its first report stated that the best available evidence indicated that it was only where class sizes became very small that gains in achievement were of practical significance. Given the more favourable pupil-teacher ratios in South Australia when compared with other major Australian States, the Committee must seriously question whether the relatively marginal improvement in these ratios during the past three or four years when compared with the early 1970s has brought benefits commensurate with the additional costs involved. The Committee has already expressed concern that the Education Department has not introduced evaluation and assessment systems which could be used to demonstrate that the benefits derived from such gains in pupil-teacher ratios would be compatible with the increased expenditure incurred. The Committee would certainly oppose a return to the unacceptable pupil-teacher ratios of the 1960s. However, it must also acknowledge that no serious deterioration is likely to occur in the quality of education if pupil-teacher ratios were to be marginally increased in South Australian schools. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that adequate resources would be made available to finance the initiatives and developments proposed if pupil-teacher ratios were held constant.

16.9 The first question that must be asked is whether at current salary levels there would be sufficient savings over the coming decade through the holding of pupil-teacher ratios at a constant level to warrant the introduction

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2. Karmel, P.H. Education in the Eighties: Some More Economic Aspects of Education. Australian Education Review No.15. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, 1981, p.27.
3. Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp.15-13 and 15-14.

of such a policy. The overall decline in student numbers is associated with changes in enrolments in primary and secondary schools at different rates and the salary costs of staff at the two levels are also different. As a consequence, it is useful to consider the effects of a decline in enrolments separately for primary and secondary schools. It has also been considered valuable to examine separately the effects of holding pupil-teacher ratios constant for classroom teachers from those for all teachers, which would include teachers holding promotion positions. This has been necessary because the teachers in promotion positions are more likely to continue in employment, so that without the introduction of policies of retrenchment and declared redundancy, it could be difficult to reduce the numbers of teachers holding promotion positions and effect the savings implied by the reduction in student numbers. The data for predicted school enrolments that have been used in the calculations which follow are the latest estimates provided by the Education Department. From these estimates it has been possible to obtain for each year over the decade from 1982 to 1991 the enrolment changes at the primary and secondary levels, the drop implied in the numbers of teachers through holding a constant pupil-teacher ratio, and the corresponding savings in salaries. This information is recorded in Table 16.1. It should also be noted that the losses until 1988, when an increase is expected to occur, will be cumulative, and as a result the saving in salaries will also be cumulative as indicated in Table 16.1. The cumulative salary savings per annum are substantial, and the assumptions (a) and (b) used in the calculations must be regarded as minimum and maximum possible savings on salaries in the government schools. However, there will be further savings because the funding provided for non-government schools is tied to that provided for government schools, and in the absence of such reductions the costs of educating students in non-government schools would escalate by a corresponding amount.

16.10 Before giving too much consideration to the feasibility of making such reductions in the total numbers of teachers in government schools in South Australia as a consequence of reductions in the total numbers of students in the schools, it is necessary to examine whether the costs per student in the government schools of South Australia are higher than those in the schools of other States. In Table 16.2 we have recorded evidence that has become available from a study recently completed by the Commonwealth Schools Commission in which the direct school level costs for both primary and secondary schools considered together have been calculated for each of the States for the categories: teachers salaries, administrative and ancillary staff salaries, and recurrent

Table 16.1 **The Estimated Annual and Cumulative Cost-Savings Arising from Holding Pupil-Teacher Ratios Constant in South Australian Government Schools over the Decade 1982-1991**

| Primary | Enrolment Change | Drop in Teacher Numbers[c] | | Salary Savings ($M) | | Cumulative Savings ($M) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) |
| Year 1982 | -4800 | -205 | -262 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 3.6 |
| 1983 | -5200 | -222 | -284 | 3.7 | 5.0 | 7.1 | 9.6 |
| 1984 | -5100 | -218 | -279 | 3.6 | 4.9 | 10.7 | 14.5 |
| 1985 | -3300 | -141 | -180 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 13.0 | 17.7 |
| 1986 | -1700 | - 73 | - 93 | 1.2 | 1.6 | 14.2 | 19.3 |
| 1987 | -1100 | - 47 | - 60 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 15.0 | 20.4 |
| 1988 | - 300 | - 13 | - 16 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 15.2 | 20.7 |
| 1989 | + 200 | + 9 | + 11 | -0.1 | -0.2 | 15.1 | 20.5 |
| 1990 | + 600 | + 27 | + 33 | -0.4 | -0.6 | 14.7 | 19.9 |
| 1991 | +1000 | + 45 | + 55 | -0.7 | -1.0 | 14.0 | 18.9 |
| **Secondary** | | | | | | | |
| Year 1982 | - 900 | - 53 | - 79 | 0.9 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 1.5 |
| 1983 | - 400 | - 23 | - 35 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 2.2 |
| 1984 | - 500 | - 29 | - 44 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 3.0 |
| 1985 | -1400 | - 81 | -123 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 3.2 | 5.3 |
| 1986 | -2400 | -140 | -211 | 2.4 | 3.9 | 5.6 | 9.2 |
| 1987 | -3500 | -205 | -307 | 3.6 | 5.8 | 9.2 | 15.0 |
| 1988 | -3700 | -216 | -325 | 3.8 | 6.1 | 13.0 | 21.1 |
| 1989 | -2900 | -170 | -254 | 2.9 | 4.8 | 15.9 | 25.9 |
| 1990 | -2100 | -123 | -184 | 2.1 | 3.5 | 18.0 | 29.4 |
| 1991 | -1600 | - 94 | -140 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 19.6 | 32.0 |
| **Primary and Secondary** | | | | | | | |
| Year 1982 | -5700 | -258 | -341 | 4.3 | 6.1 | 4.3 | 6.1 |
| 1983 | -5600 | -245 | -319 | 4.1 | 5.7 | 8.4 | 11.8 |
| 1984 | -5600 | -247 | -323 | 4.1 | 5.7 | 12.5 | 17.5 |
| 1985 | -4700 | -222 | -303 | 3.7 | 5.5 | 16.2 | 23.0 |
| 1986 | -4100 | -213 | -304 | 3.6 | 5.5 | 19.8 | 28.5 |
| 1987 | -4600 | -252 | -367 | 4.4 | 6.9 | 24.2 | 35.4 |
| 1988 | -4000 | -229 | -341 | 4.0 | 6.4 | 28.2 | 41.8 |
| 1989 | -2700 | -161 | -243 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 31.0 | 46.4 |
| 1990 | -1500 | - 96 | -151 | 1.7 | 2.9 | 32.7 | 49.3 |
| 1991 | - 600 | - 49 | - 85 | 0.9 | 1.6 | 33.6 | 50.9 |

Notes:
(a) Under assumption that only pupil-teacher ratios for assistant teachers (base grade) are held constant.
(b) Under assumption that pupil-teacher ratios for all teachers are held constant.
(c) The relevant ratios used in the analysis are for assistant teachers: primary - 23.4; secondary - 17.1; and for all teachers: primary - 18.3; secondary - 11.4.

Table 16.2 Direct School Level Costs per Student in Australian States for the Financial Year, 1978-1979

| | Australian Capital Territory | New South Wales | Victoria | South Australia | Western Australia | Tasmania | Seven Systems |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Salaries** | | | | | | | |
| Teachers | 1028 | 767 | 959 | 925 | 749 | 845 | 854 |
| Ancillary and Administrative | 94 | 50 | 37 | 98 | 66 | 74 | 57 |
| Total Salaries | 1122 | 817 | 995 | 1024 | 816 | 919 | 911 |
| Contingencies | 224 | 200 | 204 | 198 | 294 | 234 | 216 |
| Total Costs | 1346 | 1017 | 1199 | 1222 | 1110 | 1153 | 1127 |

Note: The Queensland Education Department did not take part in the study.
Source: Commonwealth Schools Commission.

costs for items commonly known as contingencies.[4] From the evidence presented in Table 16.2 it is clear that while the costs per student in South Australia for contingencies are the lowest in Australia the salary costs for teachers and particularly for ancillary and administrative staff are high. This information together with the evidence presented in the first report of this Committee on the generous level of the pupil-teacher ratios in South Australia provides confirmation that, irrespective of the size of the school systems in the other five Australian States, the level of provision per student in South Australia is such that to hold it constant rather than allow it to increase would not place schools in South Australia at a disadvantage relative to schools in other States. It is necessary to emphasize that the Committee is not advocating a reduction in level of provision but merely holding the ratio constant at a time of enrolment decline.

16.11 It is also necessary to consider the feasibility of such a proposal associated with a reduction in the absolute size of the teaching force, and to determine whether or not the reduction in the numbers of teachers that would take place could be accommodated by processes of natural attrition rather than by retrenchment. The current attrition rates for all teachers leaving the teaching service are approximately 4.5 per cent for primary school teachers and 4.1 per cent for secondary school teachers from a teaching force of 7,500 primary school teachers and 6,500 secondary school teachers. However, information is not available for the attrition rates for teachers holding promotion positions, despite the fact that there is a growing problem of over-establishment numbers for such staff relative to current staffing formulae. This information does not appear to be regarded as important for planning and policymaking. It is clear that for Assistant Teachers the losses due to attrition would be such as to permit the implementation of a policy of holding constant the pupil-teacher ratio, but certain difficulties might be encountered for teachers in promotion positions. Further problems arise in so far as the losses that are occurring through attrition might not be uniform across different levels of schooling, junior primary, primary and lower secondary, or across different curriculum areas in the secondary schools. Thus there might well develop an undersupply of teachers in certain areas and a surplus in others, if the policies proposed were implemented.

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[4] Commonwealth Schools Commission. School Resources Study Part One. Canberra: The Commission, 1981, p.67ff.

16.12 One of the inevitable consequences of holding the pupil-teacher ratio constant would be to exacerbate the problems already being faced by the colleges of advanced education and this could well lead to further disruption of most teacher education programs in the State. The consequences of this may be unfortunate, because if ever there should be a significant change in the size of the school-aged population in the State as a result of increased immigration or changing patterns in the birth rate, or alternatively a significant increase in the attrition rates for teachers, particularly for teachers in certain curriculum areas, there may need to be a re-establishment of teacher education programs to cope with the change in demand. However, it is important to emphasize that what is being proposed is not a significant reduction in the total education budget during the next decade, but rather the opening up of new initiatives as a result of the savings being made. These initiatives could include a diversification of courses offered at the upper secondary school level and the introduction of new types of programs in the colleges of technical and further education. To implement these changes staff with different skills and with expertise outside the traditional areas would be required. It is clear that new policies would be difficult to introduce rapidly. Both the Department of Further Education and the Education Department would need to lay down plans, and would need to improve greatly the quality of the statistics and other information that they currently hold on their teaching forces, in order to co-ordinate their programs carefully with the supply of graduates of specific types from the universities and colleges of advanced education. To the best of our knowledge as a Committee this co-ordinated planning of supply with demand is not taking place effectively and is not being considered of sufficient priority to warrant the development of procedures that would permit such planning to take place.

16.13 One of the most plausible arguments that has been advanced to oppose the suggestion that the numbers of teachers should decline in proportion to the level of student enrolments has been that the enrolment decline is thinly spread across many schools and that a reduction of one or two students in each class each year does not lead to the elimination of the class or to removal of the need for a teacher of the class. This argument fails to recognize that there are well established strategies for dealing with schools of all sizes from the very small to the very large, and for age and grade groups of all sizes. While the costs associated with the operation of small schools are greater than those for large schools, there is, marginally, little to be lost and little to be gained from the point of view of recurrent costs from spreading enrolments more evenly over schools[5]. There is, however, much to be gained educationally, we believe, from reducing the size of a large school and from increasing the size of a small school where possible, and if there are no other costs incurred, such as transport costs, to produce schools that are large enough to have a lively and viable program of activities and not so large as to suffer the defects associated with large schools. Thus while it is not a simple task to establish mixed year level classes after working with a relatively homogeneous age group, and to have constantly to adjust the sizes and structure of class groups to allow for declining enrolments, it is one that can be undertaken without any students being disadvantaged in their education. It must be recognized and acknowledged that a school of the same size operated successfully in the past during a period of growth with the same numbers of students and with the same age and year group composition as the school whose numbers are now declining. There is much to be gained from an open discussion of models and guidelines for schools which are operating in a period of declining numbers in order to assist such schools to adjust their structure and accommodate successfully to decline and to reductions in the numbers of staff working in the school.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.3 (a) pupil-teacher ratios should be held at least constant and schools should be required to undergo reductions in the teaching force to a level that is consistent with their current pupil-teacher ratio as the numbers of pupils decrease;

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[5] On this point we disagree with the report prepared by the Centre for Policy Studies, Monash University: The Changing Patterns of School Enrolment and Their Implications for Educational Policy and Management. Canberra: AGPS, 1981.

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(b) models, guidelines and strategies should be developed and discussed with school principals and staff to enable schools to adjust to enrolment decline, and to reductions in the number of staff in the school to levels associated with constant pupil-teacher ratios; and

(c) the Education Department should improve the quality of data that it holds about the teaching service so that more adequate planning can occur in colleges of advanced education and universities, to ensure that an adequate supply of teachers is available at all times during the next decade to meet the demands of particular educational levels and in specific curriculum areas.

16.14 The Committee is aware that a significant over-establishment problem already exists in many schools with respect to staff in promotion positions, in certain curriculum areas of secondary schools, and at certain educational levels in schools of all types. Unfortunately data are not available on the attrition rates for such staff and the nature and extent of the problem in the long term is not known. Solutions to these problems lie in the collection of more accurate information, thorough analysis of the potential for staff reduction by natural attrition, and the implementation of a more flexible promotion structure including the use of limited tenure appointments for teachers in promotion positions as was recommended by the Committee in its first report.[6]

## The Decline in Enrolments and the Management of Facilities

16.15 As was consistent with the views presented in the report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia in 1971 of a gradually expanding educational system, there has been heavy expenditure during the past decade at all the levels in the education sector on the erection of buildings. While there are under-utilized facilities at the South Australian Institute of Technology, at the Levels, in the Colleges of Further Education, for example, at O'Halloran Hill, in secondary schools, for example, at Glenunga High School, in primary schools, particularly in the Adelaide City area, and in kindergarten centres, there has been no attempt made to develop a co-ordinated system of management of facilities across the whole of the sector. It must be recognized that the problems are complex. Although there are under-utilized facilities in certain places there is still a need for the development of new facilities in outer suburban areas to satisfy the demand for schooling in the new housing estates being built in those areas. Nevertheless, with the increasing costs of petrol and of public transport there is likely to be some redevelopment of housing in the inner suburbs as well as in the city area itself. It is uncertain, however, whether this redevelopment will attract families with school-age children or whether such families will continue to concentrate in outer suburban areas.

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[6] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., p.15-32.

16.16 The Committee's Resources Working Party undertook, with the help of staff of the Public Buildings Department, a detailed study of the relative costs of school provision in South Australia. In addition, the Working Party examined such questions as whether, in the face of a decline in total enrolments, space had become available for alternative use, and for what purpose such space was currently being used. It became clear at early stages in the investigation that there were no convenient and relevant central data available which could be used to monitor the provision of facilities and the accommodation requirements of schools. However, the Public Buildings Department has recently begun to undertake the compilation of a register of assets in the education sector. In addition, a joint Public Buildings Department and Education Department Working Party has been established to develop an appropriate central recording system for school facilities and to determine how this system could be maintained in relation to the changing use of accommodation resulting from changing curricula and teaching methods.

16.17 The Interim Report of the Australian Schools Commission in 1973 had noted the problems that were likely to occur and suggested that a school buildings research centre might be established and that it might give attention to:

> the question of the life span for which school buildings, especially at the primary school level, should be designed. The primary school is usually located close to the population it serves and is hence exposed to considerable fluctuations in the number of children close by. When permanent contractions in school-age population occur, attempts ought to be made to use the buildings for alternative purposes; but such attempts are often inhibited by the nature of school buildings, particularly those constructed many years ago.[7]

The Schools Commission did not proceed to examine these issues at any depth and belatedly undertook a National Cost Study of schools, using only a limited number of schools and producing data of uncertain validity. Nevertheless, the report of the National Cost Study did establish standard procedures for comparing cost and space data on schools and made firm recommendations for primary and secondary schools. This work has yielded a reasonable basis for the comparison of the current standards being provided in South Australian schools.[8] However, the broader issues raised by the Interim Committee of the Australian Schools Commission in 1973 have not been adequately addressed and there is little material available in Australia on which to base the sound management of capital facilities. At the present time the problems are more widespread and more acute in South Australia as a consequence of declining enrolments than was envisaged by that Committee.

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[7] Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission (Chairman: P.H. Karmel). Schools in Australia. Canberra: AGPS, 1973, p.81.

16.18 The Education Department has also undertaken a review of the planning and management of facilities required in a period of declining enrolments and has been able to assemble evidence of areas where decline in numbers is likely to be sufficiently critical to require some action[9]. This report recommended the determination of criteria for the space that schools were entitled to occupy, and a review of accommodation at schools with an apparent surplus. In addition, it recommended the development of policies for the disestablishment of schools, the amalgamation of schools, the use of school facilities for alternative purposes, modifications in the structure or year level groupings of schools that would permit more efficient use of space, and the provision of transport and travelling allowances in both metropolitan and country areas, thereby enabling better use of existing facilities and reducing the need for the erection of new facilities.

16.19 The Education Department has already introduced a number of policies that have led to the more flexible management of facilities at a time of enrolment decline. These include the policy of dezoning of schools to permit students to attend a school of their choice. While this has already led to a significant number of schools in the metropolitan area now being filled to capacity, it has also led to a decline in enrolments in adjacent schools that appear to be less attractive to students living in the surrounding districts. A policy has operated for some years of erecting a core of solidly constructed buildings and adding to this core classroom buildings of a temporary nature at a time of expansion in enrolments, and removing from the core these temporary buildings at a time of enrolment decline. However, while such buildings can be erected relatively quickly they tend to be rather more difficult to remove. As these temporary classrooms cease to be occupied for normal teaching purposes they are modified to serve other functions, and an expectation is developed of the availability of facilities over and above the standard entitlement for a school. Frequently too, such temporary buildings are encircled by more permanent structures and become almost impossible to remove without dismantling these structures. Thus the school has acquired facilities that require maintenance and involve cleaning costs, but for which funds are no longer available as a consequence of reduced enrolments.

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[8] Schools Commission. Comparative Capital Costs of Government and Non-Government Schools in Australia. Canberra: The Commission, 1978.

[9] South Australia, Education Department, Directorate of Planning and Research. S.A. Government Schools. Report on Enrolment Changes: Planning and Management of Facilities. Adelaide: The Department, 1981.

16.20 The Committee addressed some of these issues in Chapter 16 of its first report on "The Management of Resources", and it would not wish to change the general thrust of its recommendations in the light of the further evidence that has become available in the intervening period. It has, nevertheless, been in a position to observe reactions to the report that it prepared as well as the reactions from certain groups and schools that have become threatened by the proposals advocated in the report prepared by the Education Department on the implications of enrolment changes for the planning and management of facilities. It is clear that groups under threat by proposals emanating from a central authority, irrespective of the soundness or otherwise of the recommendation, tend to resist change commonly through political processes. This reaction is probably inevitable if the threatened group has not been involved in the making of the decision, and is thus led to see change as an imposition thrust upon them from outside. There is little doubt that the central administration has a responsibility to ensure the efficient use of resources, but it also has an obligation to ensure that its policies are implemented with minimum disruption to the provision of educational services. Thus if a group is led to take disruptive action consequential losses might exceed the expected gains. The Committee under these circumstances, and in the light of its observations of the reactions to events during the past 12 months, advances certain further general proposals that it believes should be taken into consideration over the next decade in the management of educational facilities. It does not reject the more detailed proposals and recommendations that have been developed by the Public Buildings Department or the Education Department. These are generally accepted as being appropriate proposals for the existing conditions and circumstances. However, it is argued that there are other aspects that also need to be taken into consideration if effective management of resources and facilities is to occur at a time of enrolment decline.

## Towards the Improved Management of Facilities

16.21 Enrolment decline both in restricted areas and of a more general nature requires the effective management of existing resources as well as the development of more flexible policies for expenditure on both capital and recurrent resources. The development of such policies must be guided by four interrelated objectives:

1. to meet the educational needs and requirements with respect to both curricula and teaching methods;
2. to reduce recurrent costs associated with the maintenance and cleaning of buildings;
3. to ensure that building stock has the optimal potential to meet future enrolment fluctuations and changes in educational needs, and thus to relieve as far as is possible the future need for additional capital expenditure;
4. to obtain maximum benefit for the community through the renting or the sale of buildings for educational or other related purposes.[10]

While the first of these objectives has been the major aim of those responsible for the provision of educational facilities in the past, the remaining three objectives involve questions that have not previously been considered in detail in the management of educational facilities. Moreover, the fourth objective requires that attention be given to matters that are outside the educational sector in so far as school buildings, commonly of a standard design, can be converted to serve other purposes. To satisfy these objectives, and in particular the fourth objective, requires the consideration of issues that administrators in the education sector have in the past not examined. Indeed, it is unlikely that the administrators of other governmental agencies or departments have had experience in considering such questions as to whether the combination of property sales or rental together with the consequent reduction in recurrent expenditure could be used to cover the costs of new constructions required within the system. Concern would need to be given to such factors as maintenance costs, market values, return from rental on a capital investment, new methods of funding, with the repayment of loans obtained at commercial or reduced rates, and the amortization of initial outlays. Furthermore, the education sector is so diffuse both in geographic areas and institutional types and the capital outlay so large, that the sums of money involved in the administration of property across the whole of the education sector exceeds that of most commercial enterprises. Currently, each major component of the education sector is managing its own affairs, in the main, without collaboration or consideration of the needs of others. Thus, there is a lack of co-ordination across the whole of the sector. At the same time within each component there is a centralization of management that divorces the administrators from the users, and commonly sets one against the other in an effort to outwit the other and to achieve an outcome considered to be desirable from either the perspective of the management or the user. A new approach is required for the management of property, if maximum benefits are to be gained at a time when the resources available for educational purposes are limited. Some educational administrators are hesitant about new approaches, mainly because they fear that educational considerations will become subordinate to financial ones. However, unless more efficient management procedures are introduced many desired and sound educational developments cannot be implemented. The Committee proposes several initiatives that will lead to more efficient property management, and will enable the necessary development of capital facilities to meet the educational needs of individual schools as well as the requirement to provide new services in areas where there is population growth. While we are aware that consideration along the lines that the Committee proposes is taking place within the educational system, there is a fear, not without some foundation, that unduly simplistic approaches could be taken to the emerging problems and that one of the four objectives listed above could well dominate the consideration of issues to the detriment of education in the future.

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[10] These objectives are derived from those listed in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Decentralized Program of Educational Building Steering Committee. Opportunities for Rationalization. PEB(81)2. October, 1981. (mimeo).

## Property Management at the School Level

16.22 The starting point for effective property management must be the individual educational institution. The most serious problem that we see is the potential for a clash that exists between the school and its teachers, students, parents and council, and the central educational administration and the Public Buildings Department, who accept responsibility for maintenance and cleaning and other aspects of recurrent expenditure. In its first report the Committee advanced the concept of a "basket of services" by means of which a school would receive a block grant to cover its recurrent expenditure in all areas except staffing according to a formula laid down for a model "basket of services". The determination of priorities for expenditure and the allocation of moneys to particular items would be the responsibility of the school and

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its council (See Recommendation R16.10)[11]. The successful implementation of such a policy would require the transfer of funding for school and college maintenance from the Public Buildings Department to the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education and the subsequent devolution of responsibility for maintenance to the school, college and regional levels (See Recommendation R16.6).[12] Thus under this approach it would also be necessary for greater responsibility for budgeting and accounting of expenditure to be devolved to schools (See Recommendation R16.5).[13] Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that the issues of amalgamation of schools, of closure of a particular school, the disposal of under-utilized facilities, the renting of school amenities, as well as the costs of development of new facilities would become readily apparent to a School Council that had accepted responsibility for the administration and management of its own property in the manner outlined above. Unless the costs of maintaining a school are taken into consideration and responsibility accepted for these costs by the School Council, it is unlikely that sound decisions could be made with respect to the efficient management of the property occupied by the school. In addition, it would be expected that the school could lease its facilities for certain specified purposes and under specified conditions obtain additional funds which could then be used to supplement the educational program of the school.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.4 (a) schools should be given greater freedom to manage their own affairs, that a notional "basket of services" should be developed to cover all school based recurrent non-salary costs and that schools should be assigned an annual block grant to meet such costs, and that the expenditure of the grant should be the responsibility of the School Council;

(b) the level of grant should be reviewed annually to cover cost changes calculated on the notional "basket of services";

(c) the income obtained by a school from leasing its facilities should, under specified circumstances, be used to supplement the educational program of that school; and

(d) a school should be charged leasing fees for facilities held that are surplus and above standard requirements.

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[11] Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1981. op. cit., pp.16-13 and 16-14.

[12] ibid. pp.16-8 and 16-9.

[13] ibid. pp.16-7 and 16-8.

## Property Management at the System Level

16.23 The proposals advanced above involve the devolution of responsibility for the management of property within the educational sector as far as is possible to individual schools, together with the co-ordination of the use of property at the regional level. However, it is important to recognize that very substantial amounts of public moneys are associated with the properties held by the different bodies within the education sector, and the needs of those bodies can differ markedly at different times. Thus it is necessary for a Property Advisory Group to be set up to oversee developments and the use of property not only within each body or each component part of the education sector, but also across the whole of the sector and where necessary to transfer property from one body to another in order to satisfy changing needs. It is appropriate that the Property Advisory Group should be attached to the Office of the Ministry of Education, with a membership that includes persons from the State Treasury, from the Public Buildings Department, as well as persons with expertise in commercial property transactions.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.5 (a) a Property Advisory Group should be established and attached to the Office of the Ministry of Education that has oversight of all property transactions within the educational sector;and

(b) the Property Advisory Group should be so constituted that its membership includes persons from such Government Departments as the State Treasury, the Public Buildings Department as well as persons with expertise in commercial property transactions.

The Committee envisages that each of the constituent bodies of the education sector would continue to maintain sections concerned with the management of property, but that these sections should be slightly reduced because some of their current functions would be carried out by the Property Advisory Group.

16.24 It is clear that both the Property Advisory Group and the constituent bodies within the education sector would need to have a more detailed knowledge of the properties they own, their location, main features and possible future uses. A new inventory of buildings held by the Education Department is in preparation by the Public Buildings Department, and the use of a computer based system should facilitate the establishment, maintenance and regular updating of the system, as well as make the retrieval of information from the system quicker and more efficient than at present. The Committee is aware of the delays encountered in the preparation of computer programs for the system being established in South Australia, and expresses surprise that permission has not been obtained to use effective systems that have been established in other countries with similar problems such as the system developed by the Scottish Education Department.

16.25 In addition to setting up a register of educational facilities it is also necessary to obtain information on what each item in the register costs to operate and maintain. The major difficulty in obtaining such information is that to provide accurate data on operational costs is itself a costly undertaking. However, the fact remains that such information will be necessary for the effective management of the property at the local institution level, and the councils and committees responsible for the management of property at this level should be encouraged to obtain such information for themselves from their own records and transactions. If detailed and accurate information on recurrent expenditure, maintenance, energy, cleaning and security is available then the implications of proposed changes to the existing stock could be calculated with some precision. A major problem at a time of declining enrolments is associated with the tendency of schools to extend the use of under-utilized classrooms for extra staff accommodation, music practice rooms, craft rooms, and the like without concern for the cost implications of maintaining possession of the buildings. Not only does the council of a school or educational institution need to be aware of the additional demands of surplus accommodation, but the central administration also needs to recognize that there are expanding expectations from the school with the surplus accommodation as well as from neighbouring schools that seek additional facilities. There is also a probable reluctance on the part of schools with additional facilities to return those facilities to regular use at times when the fluctuations in enrolments lead to an increase in the number of students attending the school. The central administration must be in possession of data that would enable the presentation of firm evidence to the school councils in order that sound decisions are made for the efficient and economical management of property.

16.26 Documents prepared by the staff of the Education Department and the Public Buildings Department on behalf of the Resources Working Party and submitted to the Committee show that extensive rationalization of property within the education sector is possible. One estimate indicated a surplus at the present time of at least 1,000 classroom units, with a total annual cleaning bill of $1,500,000. The number of such classrooms is likely to increase significantly over the next decade, yet proposals for the more rational and efficient use of educational facilities are likely to be ineffective unless those groups with vested interests, the teachers, the students and the school councils permit the proposals to be implemented. Furthermore, each of these groups could mount a campaign both at the local school level and at a more widespread level across a region or across the State that could be divisive and counter-productive of both time and effort. As a consequence the proposals for necessary changes could be thwarted and moneys allocated to the maintenance of facilities that are largely redundant, while other urgently needed services could not be established for lack of available funds. The Committee is concerned that with a problem of such magnitude arising over the next decade there is insufficient preparation, not in the assessment of the facilities involved, but rather in the development of appropriate processes of consultation across the whole of the education sector. Some excellent compromise arrangements are being implemented with individual schools where a problem of sufficient magnitude has emerged to warrant detailed consideration. However, the issues are more widespread, and School Councils across the State need to be brought into consultation forthwith in order that substantial savings might be made in a few years time.

## Disadvantaged Schools

16.27 At the same time as there is surplus accommodation in certain schools, there is also a need for the development of new facilities not only to meet the demand for school accommodation in the expanding outer suburbs, but also to meet a demand for new educational programs in existing institutions. Such demands include the provision of facilities for programs for unemployed youth, for computer centres in schools, and for community groups to use for leisure education and recurrent education purposes. A new sports centre, hall or swimming pool can be shared jointly by both the school and the community, and is an asset of considerable educational worth. The Education Department has developed an imaginative and flexible Capital Works Assistance Scheme, which was introduced in July 1979 and which allows School Councils to borrow up to 90 per cent of the cost for a capital works project for a school, if the project and the loan is approved by the Minister of Education. In the past School Councils could be required to contribute up to 50 per cent of the estimated cost of the project in cash, and meet loan repayments from their own resources. This, however, has facilitated development in areas where the parents could afford to make a substantial contribution. Under the Capital Works Assistance Scheme, School Councils with as little as 10 per cent deposit could obtain approval to borrow funds and receive assistance from the State Government towards loan repayment commitments. This has enabled a number of School Councils, which were previously unable to qualify for a loan, to obtain approval

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to borrow money to undertake major capital projects in their schools. Many of the projects to date are sports halls. As well as providing a facility for the school, income from hire of the facility to community and sporting organizations is obtained to assist in loan repayments and to provide other resources for the school. The scheme is monitored by the School Loans Advisory Committee and Regional Capital Assistance Committees and applications are investigated by these Committees to ensure that the financial proposals reflect community support. Nevertheless, while the scheme is beneficial to a wider range of schools, it still allows schools in more affluent areas to increase further the facilities they possess. An unfortunate consequence could be that the funds which are being expended to assist schools to develop their facilities might cause students to migrate from a less advantaged school to one with better facilities, and so reduce the chances of the less advantaged school enlisting parental support to upgrade its own facilities. These issues need to be seen in relation to the financial support available for disadvantaged schools to assist them in the upgrading of their facilities. The system of a program of a prospective review of every school once every three years would seem to provide a sound basis for recommendations being made to the School Loans Advisory Committee by a committee of review as well as recommendations being made for a school to receive supplementary support both for recurrent and capital expenditure on the grounds of the disadvantaged nature of the school and the community it serves.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.6 (a) the School Loans Advisory Committee should be required to receive advice through the Prospective Review Scheme to ensure that the loan being provided for a school meets an educational need of the school; and

(b) schools which are disadvantaged, because of the nature of the community served by the school, should continue to be eligible for financial support under a Disadvantaged Schools Capital Works Program to enable such schools to improve their facilities and that advice on the awarding of grants through this program should be obtained through the Prospective Review Scheme.

16.28 It would be unfortunate if a marked gap in the level of facilities between schools in more affluent areas and schools in disadvantaged areas were again allowed to develop. The balance that must be maintained is one between the moneys available for assistance with loan repayments from government sources, and the moneys available to maintain the Disadvantaged Schools Program. Recent research by Ross indicates that there is little difficulty in identifying schools that have a high degree of social disadvantage and that such social disadvantage is strongly related to the educational disadvantage experienced by the students[14]. That society has an obligation to assist those students who are disadvantaged in their education has become an accepted tenet of education in Australia since the publication of the report of the Interim Committee of the Australian Schools Commission in 1973[15]. However, whether in view of the current economic climate such programs can be maintained is uncertain.

## Direct Grant Schools

16.29 The principles advanced in Paragraph 16.22 concerned with provision of a block grant to schools to cover their recurrent expenditure in the non-salary area, according to a notional "basket of services", could well be extended to set up what might be known as "direct grant schools". The concept of a basket of services would be extended to cover salary costs as well as non-salary costs and selected schools would be invited to become "direct grant schools" receiving a grant to cover all operating costs. The grant would be administered by the School Council, and the school would be free to establish an educational program and to make appropriate provision for the services it offered from the grant available. In addition, the school would also be able to supplement the funds available through the direct grant by leasing its premises, or by charging fees, provided that no student was excluded from a school on the grounds of race, sex, ethnic background, intellectual ability, religion or ability to pay the fees required. However, it would be possible for a school operating under these conditions to give preference to certain students, who had an interest in or the capacity to succeed in certain specified curricular areas, such as the study of music, drama and foreign languages. In the first instance such schools that became direct grant schools could well be schools in established country towns, where the school did not operate in competition with other schools, or schools in the metropolitan area that offered a particular program, which had led to the school reaching its maximum capacity of students. Some problems might arise in the determination of the schedules for the basket of services, particularly with respect to the relative weighting of various personnel and material resource categories. However, there is no reason why the relative entitlements of schools under this approach should differ greatly from the relative entitlements that currently operate for the allocation of staffing and other resources to schools. Each school would, however, be free to determine the appropriate configuration of the teaching staff most appropriate to meet its needs. If the needs of a school were to change then the school would necessarily have to make the necessary changes in its staff composition, and some problems might arise with staff who became redundant. However, it would be essential that a direct grant school should be required to undergo a prospective review every three years, in order to provide full accountability for the expenditure of public moneys, and to ensure that the freedom given to the school was being used to develop educationally sound and approved curricula.

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[14] Ross, K.N., Social Area Indicators and Educational Achievement. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER, (in press).

[15] Interim Committee of the Australian Schools Commission, 1973, op. cit.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.7 (a) consideration should be given to permitting selected schools to become direct grant schools receiving a block grant, appropriately calculated to cover all staffing and recurrent resource expenditure for a year with the use of these resources being determined by the School Council;

(b) a direct grant school would be required to follow the curriculum policies that applied to all government schools;

(c) a direct grant school would also be entitled to increase its funds by the leasing of its premises or by charging fees, provided that no student would be excluded from the school on account of an inability to pay the required fees;

(d) a direct grant school would not be entitled to refuse students on the grounds of race, sex, ethnic background, religion or intellectual ability (except in the latter case where appropriate facilities are not available); and

(e) a direct grant school should be required to undergo a prospective review every three years.

## Capital Expenditure for Non-Government Schools

16.30 In its first report the Committee drew attention to the fluctuations in the number of schools, total enrolments and the proportions of enrolments in government, Catholic and independent schools that had occurred over the past 30 years. It was contended that such fluctuations were caused by a variety of factors. In 1981, there was an increase both in absolute numbers and in proportions of students attending Catholic and independent schools and a consequent decrease for the government schools. The numbers attending the non-government schools are influenced, in the main, by two related factors, the size of classes that are permitted in the schools and the total number of places available in the schools. At a time of declining enrolments, as presently exists, the government schools are likely to have accommodation available in all areas except in the expanding outer suburbs. It would be unfortunate if, under these circumstances, the non-government schools were able to attract moneys from the Commonwealth Schools Commission to enable them to increase their accommodation in areas where there were under-utilized facilities in the government schools. It would be more appropriate for the non-government schools to be encouraged to develop new schools in the expanding outer suburbs to help provide for the increased enrolments in these areas, and the Committee commends the collaborative development that is occurring at Aberfoyle Park. Nevertheless, there are critical issues in the provision of substantial sums of money from Commonwealth Government sources to non-government schools for the erection of buildings at a time of fluctuating enrolments, when in perhaps 20 years time the buildings must be vacated because of declining enrolments. If it should emerge that these buildings would need to be sold, the questions relating to the ownership of the property are clearly complex and unresolved. At this time there are no clear answers to such questions. However, the more critical issue is that of erection of new accommodation for non-government schools in areas where there is under-utilized accommodation in government schools; policies relating to such issues have not been formulated. However, the leasing of government school buildings by non-government schools seems to be an acceptable practice. In part, problems arise because the moneys available for the provision of accommodation come from the Commonwealth Government, while State resources are being under-utilized. At a time when the government school system is greatly restricted in its development, largely as a consequence of Commonwealth Government policies, the Committee considers that it is inappropriate for capital funds to be made available to non-government schools to accommodate students who could have increased the use of under-utilized accommodation in government schools. The issue involves the funding policies of the Commonwealth Government, and the State Government should initiate discussions through its Inter-Governmental Relations Unit on the matter.

## The Clustering of Schools

16.31 In Chapter 8 consideration was given to the diversification of the programs of upper-secondary schools. The costs of maintaining a wide variety of subjects in Years 11 and 12, where relatively small numbers are attracted to such courses as art/design, music, modern languages, and the different types of history offered at the matriculation level, demand that some attempts should be made to rationalize the range of subjects between schools at this level. The proposal to establish a limited number of vocational high schools is to be commended, if it has been conceived of in terms of providing only short term supplementary funding to enable some schools to concentrate their offerings in areas other than the traditional matriculation program. Thus the high school that advertises that it will be providing "something different" in the form of "commercial, creative arts, food and culinary, personal services, and technical trades" is attempting to provide relevant courses for students in the final years of schooling that differ from those that are offered in conventional programs at the matriculation level[16]. Whether or not this specialization has occurred in consultation with neighbouring high schools is unclear. Such a range of courses would, however, serve no useful purpose unless a minimum of 15 students were attracted to take each subject. In the early years of such a program a case ought to be made for subsidizing the development of alternative courses, but after an initial trial period, it would be essential that alternative courses should, like the traditional subjects, attract sufficient numbers of students to be viable from a financial aspect as well as being sound educationally. In its first report, the Committee recommended that wherever possible the diversification of curricula in schools at the upper secondary school level should be undertaken with schools in an area developing agreed policies to avoid unnecessary duplication of programs. In order for the schools in an area to cluster together in the manner recommended, it is necessary for co-ordination activities to be initiated. The Committee envisages that the Regional Director would undertake the necessary steps to guarantee not only that neighbouring schools provided appropriate alternative courses that were economically viable, but also to ensure that a higher proportion of the grade cohort remained at the schools to engage in the diversified range of courses being provided.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.8 (a) Regional Directors should ensure that high schools wherever possible form into clusters of adjacent schools to eliminate unnecessary duplication of subjects and courses, and to increase the range of courses being offered, thereby catering more adequately for the needs of a greater proportion of the school population;

(b) Regional Directors should encourage high schools to specialize their programs in particular curriculum areas, so that the subjects taught in schools at Years 11 and 12 are provided for economically viable groups.

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[16] See: The Advertiser. Saturday November 21, 1981. p.8.

## The Co-ordination of Programs at the Year 12 Level

16.32 Alternative strategies for meeting the problems discussed in the previous paragraph need to be considered. Following the publication of its first report the Committee noted renewed interest in its recommendation for the establishment of a Senior College on a trial basis. Such a Senior College, if carefully sited, and if able to attract a sufficient number of students should be able to offer a wider variety of subjects to make class groups economically viable. However, the development of new subjects at the upper secondary school level could involve additional costs for appropriate buildings and equipment, costs that could be saved if some of the subjects were taught under contract in a college of technical and further education. The Committee has noted that the extension of Link Courses at the Year 12 level between high schools and technical colleges is a means of achieving this end, and involves a more efficient and effective use of resources than any attempt to duplicate similar facilities in adjacent high schools and technical colleges. Of greater consequence, however, from a financial viewpoint are the costs incurred in finding appropriate staff to conduct courses of a technical kind in high schools, when persons with the necessary skills and expertise might be available in a technical college. Again the co-ordination across the school and the technical and further education sector would be envisaged as a prime concern of a Regional Office of the Education Department as proposed by the Committee. Such co-ordination frequently does not happen if left to chance, and the Committee has been concerned about the reluctance on the part of staff of the Department of Further Education to envisage such co-ordination activities being initiated by the Regional Offices of the Education Department.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that·

R16.9 (a) the co-ordinated planning of educational programs between the schools and colleges of technical and further education should be a prime concern of Regional Offices of Education, and where Regional Councils exist such matters should be brought before the Regional Council for its consideration; and

(b) such co-ordination between schools and colleges should aim at the more efficient and effective use of facilities and staff within the region.

16.33 In the development of strategies for co-ordination at the upper secondary school level it is important that the non-government schools should be invited to participate in both planning and programs, since the establishment of a Senior College or of alternative courses at the upper secondary school level could have significant repercussions for non-government schools.

## School Transport Services

16.34 The Education Department is a major operator of transport services with a large fleet of buses throughout the State. Clearly the Department has no alternative to providing these services where there are no commercial services available and parents are unable to provide their own transport. However, the Committee has noted instances in which school bus services are provided where commercial services appear to be available or where the contracting of commercial services may have resulted in better use of transport industry resources overall. The Committee also noted that policies on transport of school children have remained relatively unchanged for many years despite changing circumstances.

16.35 There are many issues associated with school transport that the Committee would have wished to examine but was not able to in the time available to the Resources Working Party. Nevertheless from the preliminary investigation that was undertaken sufficient information of concern was brought forward to suggest that the Education Department would be well advised to examine the problems associated with school transport in order to determine whether worthwhile savings might be made.

## Provision for Contingencies in Government Schools

16.36 In Table 16.2 information was presented on the contingencies or direct school level costs per student in the Australian States for the financial year 1978-79. It should be noted that the level of provision in South Australia was the lowest for those States whose data were recorded in the investigation. The funds provided to schools come principally from two sources. First, there are grants to schools from the Education Department. Secondly, the schools raise funds mainly by parent contributions. In addition, some schools may receive supplementary grants from Commonwealth sources as part of the Disadvantaged Schools Program, the Multicultural Education Program and similar programs conducted by the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

Table 16.3 School Support Funds for South Australian Government Schools for Years 1976-77 to 1981-82

| Year | Total School Support Funds | Number of Students | Per Student Allocation | Consumer Price Index |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1976-77 | $10.8M | 233,300 | $46.3 | 100 |
| 1977-78 | $10.4M | 231,900 | $44.9 | 110 |
| 1978-79 | $10.5M | 227,500 | $46.2 | 118 |
| 1979-80 | $10.3M | 221,700 | $46.5 | 130 |
| 1980-81 | $10.7M | 215,900 | $49.9 | 142 |
| 1981-82 | $10.5M | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. |

Note: N.A. = Not available.
Source: Education Department of South Australia.

16.37 The purposes met by the grants from the Education Department are as follows:

1. Books and materials. This grant is paid to all primary and secondary schools on a per capita basis to be used for the purchase of equipment and materials for students.
2. Supplies. This grant is made to enable schools to pay directly for postage, administrative materials, cleaning materials, equipment repairs, curriculum materials and freight.
3. School Purposes. This grant is made to assist schools with the purchase of school equipment and materials.
4. Grounds Maintenance. This grant is paid to all schools to assist with the costs of maintaining school grounds. It is calculated on the basis of the area occupied by the school together with the number of students in the school.
5. Government Assisted Students. This grant covers costs normally met by parents in cases where the parents are unable to pay. The grant is means tested.
6. Establishment. This grant is provided to new and upgraded schools to enable them to purchase new materials and major items of equipment. The level of grant varies considerably according to the type of school and the circumstances in which the school is placed.

The total support provided to schools from the six grants listed above has been recorded in Table 16.3, together with the number of students served and the per student allocation of moneys. In addition, it is of some interest to compare the level of per student allocation of moneys with the change in the Consumer Price Index for South Australia over the corresponding period. The

Table 16.4 Estimated Moneys Raised per Student for Supplementary Funding for Government Schools in South Australia in 1981

| Primary | $ Range | Secondary | $ Range |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stationery | 8 to 10 | Book Deposit (refundable) | 10 to 15 |
| Compulsory fee[a] | 15 to 25 | Compulsory fee | 20 |
| Voluntary Component | 6 to 10 | Voluntary Component | 10 to 15 |
| Total Contribution from parents | 29 to 45 | Total Contribution from parents[c] | 30 to 35 |
| Fund raising[b] | 10 | Fund raising[b] | 13 |
| Total moneys/ student | 39 to 55 | Total moneys/ student | 43 to 48 |

Notes: [a] Corresponds to charges for class materials.
[b] 1979 sample average.
[c] Excludes refundable book deposits.
Source: Education Department of South Australia.

total sum of money available over the period of six financial years from 1976-77 through to 1981-82 has not changed greatly. As a consequence, although there has been a decline in total enrolments in the South Australian Government Schools the funds made available per student have not kept pace with inflation.

16.38 In order for the schools to continue to operate effectively the money required to maintain the necessary services must be obtained from parent contributions. The contributions made by parents fall into three main classes associated with:

1. charges for essential educational materials;
2. voluntary contributions to assist a school to upgrade the equipment, the school's facilities and the grounds in which the school is set; and
3. fund-raising activities, which include both canteen profits and the hire of the school facilities.

In Table 16.4 information has been recorded on the range of income per student that might be expected from these sources. At a time when a significant proportion of parents in certain schools are unemployed or in intermittent employment, it is clear that some schools will encounter difficulties in raising the average sums of money per student recorded in the table. Some allowance is made for this in the grants available and has been considered in the previous paragraph under Government Assisted Students. However, the fact that such grants have remained static at a time when unemployment has increased must mean that some schools are encountering problems in meeting the contingency costs associated with the effective operation of the school.

16.39 Many submissions received by the Committee have drawn attention to the fact that in the years from 1973 to 1976 when funds were made available under a variety of programs to enable schools to increase the range of equipment available for educational use and to expand such areas of activity as the school library, they were able to make purchases of equipment. This equipment has now reached a stage when replacement and maintenance are required. However, funds are no longer available for such purposes and equipment must be put aside until the necessary moneys are available for these purposes. It is clear that the administration of schools has become increasingly difficult because funds are no longer available in the State to maintain a level of service within the school that has come to be expected.

16.40 The Committee has recommended that other components of expenditure be transferred to schools in accordance with the "basket of services" concept. However, the experiences of the schools over recent years have led them to become extremely suspicious of such policies, because they have learnt that the Education Department through its administrative decisions has chosen to reduce the amount of money made directly available to the schools in the form of grants to meet the contingencies, while continuing to make substantial sums of money available for other purposes. Schools fear that they are likely to be left to carry an even more intolerable burden in the future, if they have to manage larger sums of money that will effectively be reduced by further inflation. It is impossible for the Committee to examine in any detail the issues raised because of the total lack of useful information made available to it particularly in the Program Estimates, where it has noted obvious double counting of sums of money, and large items of the order of $150 million that are not broken down in a meaningful way into smaller components. Nevertheless, it is clear to the Committee that, under the current policies, the Education Department does not accept the need to maintain a consistency in the level of grants that it provides to schools in the hope that the schools will encourage parents to make greater efforts to raise the necessary funds, will become more efficient in their management of the funds that they receive, or will curtail the range of services offered within the school to the students.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.10 policies should be developed to restore the grants to schools to a clearly specified level and that in future years the grants be maintained at this level with annual adjustments to the grants to allow for increases due to inflation.

## Resource Management Functions

16.41 It is understandable with the rapid growth in resources and services in the education sector during the 1970s that the highest priority for expertise would be in the design and development of programs. In these circumstances resource management functions such as personnel, accounting and facilities management tended to be left behind in their development. The change in circumstances in recent years to a situation of restraint on resources have highlighted the weaknesses throughout the education sector in resource management functions. Much of the criticism by the Committee stems from an inability of the education agencies to identify strategies for the more effective use of limited resources and to implement strategies for the rationalization of services. There is a need for stronger representation and greater expertise in resource management functions at the policy making levels throughout the education sector. While these functions should always be supportive of the delivery of educational services, it is desirable that a balanced range of disciplines and functions be involved at the policy making level.

16.42 There has been a tendency within education for virtually all of the senior administrators to be drawn from the service delivery areas. The implied assumption in this has been that only people who have been involved in the delivery of these services can fully appreciate the issues involved. The Committee believes that such an assumption is false and that the education sector has much to gain by involving a wider range of disciplines and experience backgrounds in its management and in its advisory bodies and major studies. Indeed, this is essential if education is to be seen to be fully aware of the needs of the community and responding to these needs.

Accordingly the Committee RECOMMENDS that:

R16.11 (a) the resource management functions in the education sector should be developed so that they make an effective contribution at the policy making levels of education agencies; and

(b) the education agencies should involve people from a wide range of disciplines and experience backgrounds in their management functions.

# CHAPTER 17

# A TIME FOR CHANGE

## Towards the Future

17.1 The 1970s saw widespread changes in education in South Australia. A new vitality was generated in a state system that had remained relatively static for a long period. However, over the coming decade, many parts of the educational system will need to respond to a very substantial decline in enrolments which has occurred, and is still occurring, as a consequence of a fall in the birth rate, a drop in the arrival of migrants to the State, and the effects of changing patterns of interstate migration. There are, however, several areas where growth can be envisaged. First, there is the likely development over the decade of less formally structured, community based early childhood and family services. Secondly, there is clearly a need to make more purposeful use of the Reception Grade and the junior primary grades to provide firmer educational foundations for children who begin school at the age of five years. Thirdly, there is a need for an increase in retention rates at the upper secondary school level through the introduction of more relevant programs for students who are currently leaving school to face unemployment. Fourthly, there is an urgent need that is currently not being adequately addressed by different groups within the State to provide guaranteed education, or employment, or a combination of part-time education and part-time employment for all youth to the age of 18 years. Finally, there is a need for the colleges of technical and further education to provide services for an expanding age group currently entering the workforce and an expanding young adult population, as well as retraining programs as a result of the introduction of new technology. The major problem confronting this Committee of Enquiry is the redirection of resources to ensure that the areas of necessary growth and development will be adequately provided for over the coming decade, through a reorganization or reallocation of the services available to schools at a time of substantial enrolment decline.

17.2 The Committee also saw an urgent need for education in South Australia to redirect its efforts towards the training of a professional and skilled workforce at a time of rapid technological change. The Committee commends the efforts of the Education Department to develop the statement on the purposes of schools that has recently been published under the title Into the 80s

Our Schools and their Purposes.[1] This statement is a valuable one in so far as it has identified specifically a number of areas which the curriculum of the schools must cover. Nevertheless, the Committee considered that this statement under-emphasized the need for programs in the areas of physical education and moral education. Furthermore, an undue emphasis was placed on the area of environmental education, which was seen by the Committee to be largely concerned with attitude change towards certain environmental questions, rather than resting on a firm scientific base. The Committee does not deny the importance of the consideration of environmental issues and sees such consideration as an essential safeguard against abuse, particularly at a time of technological change. However, it views the introduction of new technology into commerce and industry as well as into the daily lives of people of the State as necessary and inevitable. What the Committee sees to be of greater importance is the need for all members of society to have a sound understanding of the new technology, its possibilities and its limitations to ensure that its introduction is balanced and beneficial. This view is consistent with those advanced in the Into the 80s statement. In addition, there is a need for an adequate supply of persons with a high level of knowledge and skill in the technological field to ensure that the State remains at the forefront of technological development, and to plan the implementation of technological change within the State. Consequently, the Committee would urge the development of certain skills at the primary school level, including facility in the use of hand calculators and keyboard instruments; the development of knowledge and understanding in the areas of language, mathematics, science and of Australian society - the foundations of further learning - at the secondary school level; and a great emphasis on the new technology and the development of related skills at the upper secondary school level. Throughout the years of schooling the Committee would envisage a greater emphasis on the development of skills of problem solving and the use of information sources than has occurred in the past. It thus endorses the emphasis on problem solving skills in the statement on schools and their purposes prepared by the Education Department. It is evident that over the decade there will be a need for purposeful and planned curriculum change in the schools across the State, and the Committee has advanced certain proposals as to how this might be accomplished more effectively than in the past.

17.3 Over recent years in the government schools there has been a healthy approach to the evaluation of schools which has been undertaken by certain schools for their own purposes. However, there has been a general neglect of evaluation of student learning and its relationships to curriculum development, as well as a neglect of issues relating to the evaluation of the system as a whole and its major component parts. Perhaps the appointment of this Committee was the first step in a continuing reassessment of the educational system and its efficiency and effectiveness. The Committee believes that the public which provides generously for education in South Australia has a right to be informed regularly on key aspects of the educational system. Furthermore, the Committee believes that there is a lack of general recognition within the system of a need for this feedback to take place. However, the emphasis on program and performance budgeting that is being introduced involves a recognition of need for a full accountability of the resources made available for educational and other purposes. Little progress has been made in the education sector towards the implementation of this system over the past two years, and as a consequence it has been completely impossible for the Committee to examine the costs of many special programs of interest to it that are currently operating within the sector.

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[1] South Australia, Education Department. Into the 80s Our Schools and their Purposes. Adelaide: Government Printer, 1981.

17.4 The Committee has proposed a system of 'Prospective Review' of all educational institutions every three years. This review would be undertaken by a panel of five persons, all from outside the individual institution being reviewed. The panel would prepare a report that would become a public statement on the operation of the institution. Each institution would be asked to prepare documents on its aims and objectives, on the success it has had with its program during the previous three years and on the nature of problems that are known to exist within the institution. In addition, the institution would be encouraged to undertake evaluation studies of particular aspects of the program of the institution in preparation for the review and to submit the report of the evaluation studies to the panel of review. The institution would also prepare statements of its needs for the coming triennium, both to meet certain problems existing within the institution, as well as for the planned development of the work of the institution. The panel would then be in a position to evaluate the effectiveness of the institution's program in the past, as well as to make an assessment of the needs of the institution for increased resources over the coming triennium in order to meet its particular objectives and to overcome its problems.

17.5 The Committee believes that there has been little emphasis on curriculum evaluation in educational institutions in the past or on the effectiveness of curricular experiences as assessed in terms of student learning. Indeed, while schools have increased their reporting to parents both formally and informally, the teachers in the schools have collected little sound comparative information on which to base their judgements. As a consequence, little attention has been given to evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum changes that have been introduced, commonly at the school level. The Committee has noted that the Into the 80s statement has advanced the proposition that school curricula must be approved.[2] The Committee urges most strongly the use of recommended curricula for schools, and that, where a school wishes to depart from the use of such recommended curricula, it should seek approval for the use of those courses which had been developed within the school. At the time of the prospective review each school would be required to report on the effectiveness of the curricula that had been developed by the school, with firm evidence where possible, as well as on the effectiveness of recommended curricula taught within the school. Using the evidence available to it and that of the learning achieved by the students within the school, the Review Panel would be in a position to recommend future policies to be adopted by the school with respect to curriculum development and use. It is important to note that curriculum evaluation is dependent on assessment of student learning and there is a lack of knowledge and expertise in South Australian schools in this area.

17.6 The colleges of technical and further education within the State must cater for a wide range of programs to serve a variety of needs. The Committee commends their movement into the field of pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational programs and endorses the rethinking that is taking place with respect to the types of courses to be provided for apprentices, as well as the emphasis on increased opportunities for apprentice training in certain areas of skill. It is evident that the colleges will need to respond rapidly to technological change in commerce and industry, particularly in the field of computing, micro-electronic control and computer assisted manufacturing in industry, as well as in the introduction of new materials. Consequently, it is important that the lecturing staff of colleges of technical and further education should take steps forthwith to increase their knowledge of the current use of new technology in industry and commerce in the State, as well as the likely changes in the future, so that they might bring their courses into line with current practices and future developments. In addition, the Committee believes that there should be an immediate introduction of courses relating to different aspects of computer use within the major colleges, with a gradual extension of such courses to all colleges in the State. Further delays in the introduction of such courses and the improvement of existing courses could, the Committee believes, have very important consequences for the development of the State.

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[2] ibid. p.36.

17.7 In its first report the Committee emphasized the likely development over the coming decade of new initiatives and programs relating to the health, education and welfare of young children. These developments are related to two main thrusts that are occurring in other parts of the world. The first thrust arises from a recognition that the family is the key agency in the education of the young child. The second thrust is associated with the fostering of a range of services to provide support and assistance for the home in furthering the growth and development of the child. There is also a demand for programs that will meet the particular needs of disadvantaged groups of children in our society: Aboriginals, newly arrived migrants, children of women in refuges, children living in isolated regions, children living in poverty, and children who have recognized physical, mental or emotional handicaps. The Committee believes that new programs and services will evolve through the promotion and support of community action and local initiatives, which will stimulate and turn to good account practices of solidarity and mutual support and assistance among members of the local communities in the State. There has been a search for greater efficiency and the better use of existing facilities which has produced many proposals for reforming the organization of the early childhood services in South Australia. In many cases, however, the proposals for reform were not very convincing, in view of the fact that a co-ordinating body already exists which has promoted an excellent and widespread cover of services across the State. Neither general centralization of all services under State control, nor the limitation or reduction of the commitment of the public sector would seem to be of value. What is required is a panoply of services which are co-ordinated but not controlled by an appropriately constituted body. In part the troubles that have arisen can be related to differences in principle resulting from a lack of recognition of the need for family based services for children from birth to four years of age, and from a lack of recognition that programs of child care must have an educative component. There will probably be a demand for an extension of programs and services in the early childhood field over the coming decade and a co-ordinating body perhaps linked to a Ministry of Family Affairs would be the most satisfactory arrangement for the future.

17.8 The Committee in its first report reviewed the provision of programs for unemployed youth in South Australia. While some valuable work is being done, there is a lack of recognition of the extent of the problems that exist in the State, and of the consequences for youth who face long periods of unemployment on leaving school. There is also a lack of awareness and acceptance of the contribution that the education sector could make in providing solutions to the problems that exist, as well as the contribution that employers could make and the level of responsibility that the family could accept in meeting the needs of youth. The Committee believes that it is important for programs that guarantee opportunities for education and/or employment for all youth to be developed that will assist youth to pass through this period of their lives in a constructive and creative way. The Committee must express concern that greater attention has not been given to the issues and the proposals that it advanced in its first report.

## The Resources Working Party

17.9 The Committee recognized from the commencement of its enquiry that it would need to examine carefully and critically several aspects of the use of resources by the education sector. As a result of the research carried out for the Committee by the Resources Working Party that it established, it has been possible to gain a much clearer and objective view of the resource implications of both current and future policies and practices. The major component of recurrent expenditure in education is that of the salaries of the teaching and administrative staffs, and the key factor that provides a link between policies in the curriculum area and the resources consumed is the pupil-teacher ratio, which includes both the factors of class size and non-contact time. It is clear that the smaller the size of the class group, both on average and for the teaching of particular courses, the greater the number of teachers required, and thus class size determines the total amount spent on teachers' salaries, and indeed on such related costs as school assistants, aides and teacher services. Likewise, the greater the amount of time that a teacher or lecturer spends on administrative duties or on preparation during the school day, the greater the number of teachers and lecturers needed to maintain a program of teaching for students. The size of the class group is, in addition, a critical factor in the level of capital resources required to establish educational institutions. Each class group of students requires a room in which to work, and while most class and lecture rooms are only used for very limited periods of the total day, it is necessary to have facilities available for the times when students are able to attend, and as a consequence the smaller the size of the class group the greater the number of classrooms required. The Resources Working Party has addressed several major issues concerned with the relationships between these factors and costs, as well as examining current policies and practices in the utilization of both recurrent and capital resources. The Committee has drawn on the reports that the Resources Working Party has prepared from its investigations of both present and future use of resources.

17.10 There are many areas where more effective and efficient use of resources could occur. These were addressed in two chapters of the first report where it was pointed out that with changes in policies and practice relating to the teaching service some economies could result. Moreover, with changes in policies and practices relating to the use of non-staff resources and capital expenditure, the money currently made available for schools would go further. In addition, the Committee recommended certain administrative changes in the Education Department both associated with the structure of the Department and the procedures that it employs for processing information. It also suggested that both the Kindergarten Union of South Australia and the then Department of Further Education should examine critically their administrative arrangements in an attempt to make more efficient use of the resources available to them. The Committee notes a widespread reluctance to effect economies. Consequently, when it has been essential for constraints to be imposed on the education sector, it has been necessary for outside bodies to intrude into management and to direct where the reductions must be effected. There has been a general lack of co-ordination across the whole of the education sector for several years. While it has been possible for this to not have a deleterious effect on the provision of education in the State at a time of expanding resources, at a time when resources are clearly limited and new initiatives need to be developed and introduced, it is perilously easy for a lack of balance to arise. The Committee proposed a number of changes that would, it believed, help to co-ordinate policies and programs across the education sector, but it has noted opposition to some of its proposals, apparently stemming from a reluctance to have evidence assembled and for evidence to be examined by competing groups in order that a more rational allocation of resources could be advanced and endorsed.

## The Effects of Decline in Enrolments

17.11 In Chapter 16 the Committee has reported the savings in recurrent resources that would occur each year over a period of ten years, if pupil-teacher ratios were to be held constant. The amounts of money involved are very substantial if current enrolment predictions are accepted. The amounts rise from four million dollars in the first year to nearly fifty million dollars in the later years of the decade. The introduction of a policy of holding constant pupil-teacher ratios would possibly involve some re-organization of the programs of schools each year, and such rationalization in the use of resources is said to be difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, constant change is accepted at a time of growth and should equally be accepted, in principle, at a time of decline in enrolments. The major difficulty associated with the adoption of such a policy is that problems will arise from the significant number of staff of particular schools working both as assistants and in promotion positions, who will become redundant within those schools. On educational grounds, however, the Committee believes that it is difficult to argue a case against the introduction at this time of policies of at least holding the pupil-teacher ratio constant. Reductions in class sizes implied by reducing pupil-teacher ratios will not produce recognizable gains in educational outcomes.

## Subjects Offered at the Year 12 Level

17.12 The Resources Working Party in its investigation of class sizes at the Year 12 grade learnt that approximately 50 percent of schools in the Adelaide metropolitan area had Year 12 enrolments below certain critical levels. Thus a school which offered a wide range of courses had many such courses attracting so few students that class groups which were grossly uneconomic in size were formed in order to maintain subjects in the curriculum that were academically respectable but which had little drawing power for Year 12 students. At the same time there was a rejection by the teaching staff and the Public Examinations Board of the provision of alternative courses that would be seen by students to be more relevant and of greater interest and that would have had a greater drawing power for some students still at school and for others who had left.

## Under-Utilization of Lecturing Staff in Colleges

17.13 From a lack of clearly defined policies, and from a tradition of employment of staff as teachers working under teacher conditions of employment developed prior to the separation of the Department of Further Education from the Education Department, certain practices have evolved within the colleges of technical and further education that are associated with a substantial under-utilization of the lecturing staff of the colleges. The lecturing staff of the colleges of technical and further education have a significant task ahead of them to reorient their knowledge and expertise, associated with training for employment in skill related occupations in commerce and industry, in accordance with the requirements of the new technology that has already or will in the foreseeable future influence the nature of the skills required. Staff development programs will need to be carried out during time available for course preparation and for administrative duties. Furthermore, the evidence available indicates that, with rationalization of programs between adjacent colleges, with movement of staff to joint appointments in two or more colleges, with the transfer of certain administrative duties from lecturing staff to administrative staff, and from the elimination of small classes that are clearly not viable, it should be possible to undertake new initiatives that will meet the need for expansion and for new courses arising from the introduction of new technology. There is, the Committee believes, from the evidence assembled and presented in this report, ample opportunity for increasing the numbers of students engaged in technical and further education programs without an immediate increase in the resources available. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that in some areas new skills, such as those associated with computing, are required by the lecturing staff, which are currently not available from among the present staff of the colleges. These will need to be provided for by the appointment of new staff.

## New Developments

17.14 The Committee in its report has outlined a substantial number of new developments required in the education sector in South Australia. These have been summarized in the opening paragraphs of this chapter and need not be repeated. It is clear that over the coming decade the introduction of these developments will cost substantial sums of money. In addition, it will be necessary to make provision for the incremental creep in teaching and lecturing staff salaries, and for the consequences of the development of a new system of classification of teaching staff within the Education Department to provide the Department with the greater flexibility needed at a time of declining enrolments. This new system of classification is needed particularly at the secondary school level where there is already a surplus of teachers in promotion positions. Greater flexibility is clearly necessary to implement policies associated with the holding of pupil-teacher ratios constant and to effect the significant savings that are possible. It is evident that from the decline in enrolments in South Australia it should be possible, if pupil-teacher ratios are held constant, to provide sufficient resources over the coming decade to introduce the various programs that the Committee has proposed, without continuing to draw resources from other areas that are clearly necessary for the well-being of the State as a whole. The Committee believes that a policy of at least holding pupil-teacher ratios constant over the next decade is an important one, which should be endorsed. Unless it is endorsed, the Committee sees no other area in which sufficient savings could be made to implement the new developments that it sees to be essential. However, the Committee recognizes that the State Government might be faced with a significant decline in the overall level of funding that it receives from the Commonwealth Government for the conduct of the affairs of the State. This has occurred in the 1981-82 financial year. Under such circumstances it would clearly be necessary for the various alternatives to be accurately costed for implementation, as and when the necessary resources become available.

## The Basket of Services for Schools and Colleges

17.15 The Committee has noted what it believes to be the inefficient use of resources that arises from the fragmentation of provision of non-staff recurrent resources to schools and colleges. It proposed in its first report the development of the basket of services approach, which it believes should operate for colleges as well as schools, which would enable institutions to have greater flexibility in the use of the funds available to them and almost certainly to permit greater efficiency in the use of these moneys. However, some misgivings must be expressed with respect to the introduction of such a scheme because in the past the Education Department has not maintained the grants that are provided for schools at a level adequate to allow for increased costs associated with inflation. Unless funds are increased through indexation to make allowance for inflation, such a scheme would be impossible to operate. Yet the provision to institutions of a grant to enable them to operate more efficiently in the provision of facilities and services has much to commend it. The Committee has also advocated that certain schools could well be established as Direct Grant schools, operating under certain conditions, that would enable these schools to appoint their own staff as well as to determine the use of resources in the area of facilities and services. The idea of a Direct Grant school is essentially an extension of the concept of a basket of services to cover staffing as well as other facilities and services.

## The Use of Capital Facilities at a Time of Decline

17.16 One area where considerable rationalization is required at a time of decline in enrolments involves buildings and property. It is estimated that there are already in excess of 1000 classroom above requirement in the grounds of schools. Further classrooms will become available each year as enrolments continue to fall. In addition, there will be properties in certain areas that will not be required in the future by one part of the education sector, but that may be of use to another, or may be disposed of, or leased in case of a future demand. The management of such reources requires care and considerable skill. As far as is possible, it would seem desirable to

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pass to School and College Councils the responsibility for the management of certain aspects of such resources. However, there is a need for a Property Advisory Group to be established to co-ordinate the use of buildings and property across the whole of the education sector. With careful management it could well be possible for the education sector to require very limited moneys for capital development in the future.

## The Impetus for Change

17.17 The major impetus for change must come from the leaders and managers in education, not only in the central administrations of departments but also from the managers in the regions and in the schools and colleges. While the ideas and initiatives coming from the staff of these institutions and from the community will always be very important, major changes must emanate from policy responses at the senior management levels. The trend towards local initiatives and decision-making during the seventies has brought many valuable innovations, but also many problems. Central administrations have generally been reluctant to intervene in the resolution of many of these problems. The Committee believes that there is a need for greater leadership and guidance to be given by managers, particularly at the regional and central levels, but without dulling the initiatives and flexibility which are so important at the local level. Many of the Committee's recommendations are directed towards this end.

## Some Uncertainties

17.18 While the Committee has sought to predict the future, it is aware of the uncertainties that exist. Because of the unpredictable nature of such matters as the population changes that have occurred in South Australia in the decade since 1970, it must be recognized that the future is uncertain. There is thus an increasing need for accurate statistics to enable careful monitoring of the changing trends in the population of the State and in educational provision in order to make maximum use of the resources that are available. It is, however, important that the State Government should acknowledge the enlightened views of George Fife Angas, one of the founders of the State:

> I consider it a duty before even a tent is set up in the new province, to provide for education.

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## APPENDIX A

## LIST OF PERSONS INVITED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY INTO EDUCATION IN 1981

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| 1 June, 1981 | Mr. J.R. Giles, Deputy Director General (Schools) Education Department<br>Mr. M.A. O'Brien, Director Curriculum, Education Deprtment<br>Mr. R.F. Smallacombe, Assistant Director Curriculum, Education Department<br>Mr. J.R. Steinle, Director General of Education |
| 2 June, 1981 | Dr. C. Cameron, Principal Education Officer, Central Northern Region, Education Department<br>Mr. E. Lovegrove, Research and Planning Division, Education Department<br>Representatives of the S.A. Institute of Inspectors of Schools - Mr. N. Highett, Mr. G. Parkinson, Mr. P. Schodde |
| 6 July, 1981 | Mr. R.G. Tasker, Acting Deputy Director General (Operations), Department of Further Education<br>Mr. P. Fleming, Director of College Operations, Department of Further Education<br>Mr. K. Parkinson, Superintendent of Research, Department of Further Education<br>Representatives of the Congress of Principals of the S.A. Colleges of Further Education - Mr. D. Duff, Mr. C. Read, Mr. B. Stanford<br>Mr. R. Mathers, Superintendent of Curriculum, Department of Further Education |
| 7 July, 1981 | Dr. F.N. Ebbeck, Executive Director, Kindergarten Union of S.A.<br>Miss R. Rogers, Assistant Director, Early Childhood Education, Education Department<br>Mrs. F. Briggs, Dean of deLissa Institute of Early Childhood Studies, Hartley College of Advanced Education<br>Mrs. J. Armitage, Senior Lecturer Child Care, Croydon Park College of Further Education<br>Mr. J. Mitchell, Principal Education Officer Curriculum Development, Department of Further Education<br>Mrs. P. Bassett, Senior Child Care Consultant, Department of Community Welfare |

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| 27 July, 1981 | Ministerial Advisory Committee on Non-Government Schools |
| 17 August, 1981 | Mr. A. Maguire, Superintendent, Primary Curriculum, Education Department |
| | Mr. D. Pallant, Superintendent, Curriculum (Humanities) Education Department |
| | Mr. K. Hamman, Principal Education Officer, Curriculum Directorate, Education Department |
| | Mr. E. Coleman, Head, Department of Mathematics, Adelaide College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. A. Patching, Lecturer in Mathematics, Hartley College of Advanced Education |
| | Mrs. M. Jeffreson, Head, Mathematics Department, Salisbury College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. A. Larkin, Lecturer in Mathematics, Sturt College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. W. Goodenough, Head, Centre for Language, Reading and Communication Studies, Adelaide College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. F. Golding, Senior Lecturer in Curriculum, Hartley College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. A. Chalmers, Head, Department of English, Salisbury College of Advanced Education |
| | Ms. H. Selge, Lecturer in Education, Sturt College of Advanced Education |
| | Ms. B. Stephens, Head, Early and Mid-Childhood Studies, Adelaide College of Advanced Education |
| | Dr. B. Keepes, Dean of School of Education, Hartley College of Advanced Education |
| | Miss M. Lilywhite, Head of School of Teacher Education, Salisbury College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. P. Brinkworth, Head of School of Teacher Education, Sturt College of Advanced Education |
| | Dr. J. Sandover, Deputy Chairman, Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia |
| | Dr. R. Teasdale, Senior Lecturer in Education, Flinders University |
| | Dr. D. Paul, Assistant Director (Academic), Salisbury College of Advanced Education |
| | Mr. P. Franklin, Acting Secretary, Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia |
| | Dr. G. Speedy, Director, Sturt College of Advanced Education |

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| 31 August, 1981 | Mr. J. Pinder, Regional Superintendent, Department of Further Education |
| | Ms. R. Blesing, Head, Language & Migrant Education, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. G. Hodgson, Superintendent School Services, Education Department |
| | Ms. A. Sexton, Supervisor, Languages & Multicultural Centre, Education Department |
| | Mr. J. Haden, Coordinator Priority Education Program, Education Department |
| | Mr. D. Waters, Priority Education Program, Education Department |
| | Mr. J. Coker, Superintendent, Aboriginal and Isolated Education, Education Department |
| | Mr. D. Duff, Principal, Panorama Community College of Further Education |
| | Mr. J. Mitchell, Principal Education Officer, Curriculum, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. C. Wegener, Senior Lecturer, Kensington Park Community College |
| | Ms. J. Gray, Lecturer, Open College of Further Education |
| | Mr. R. Wilson, Coordinator, Adult Literacy Unit, Education Department |
| | Ms. A. Dunne, Equal Opportunities Officer, Education Department |
| | Ms. L. Symons, Advisory Teacher, Women's Advisory Unit, Education Department |
| 14 September, 1981 | Mr. E. Lasscock, Assistant Director, Curriculum, (Special Education, Guidance and Special Services), Education Department |
| | Mr. K. Were, Principal Education Officer, Curriculum |
| | Mr. A. Maguire, Superintendent, Curriculum, Education Department |
| | Mr. C. Dunnett, Principal Education Officer, Educational Technology Centre, Education Department |
| | Mr. P. Sandery, Principal, Angle Park Computing Centre, Education Department |
| | Mr. J. Dwyer, Supervisor, School Libraries Branch, Education Department |
| | Mr. A. Brown, Superintendent, Education Resources Branch, Department of Further Education |

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| 5 October, 1981 | Dr. P.I. Tillett, Deputy Director General of Education |
| | Mr. D. Carter, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. R. Scholefield, Principal Education Officer, Research Branch, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. H. Mutton, Principal Education Officer, Education Department |
| | Mr. B. Stanton, Principal Education Officer Physical Education Branch, Education Department |
| | Ms. V. Battye, Equal Opportunities Officer, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. J. Haynes, Executive Officer, Special Education, Education Department |
| 26 October, 1981 | Mr. D. Bleby, Chairman, Dr. V. Eyers and Ms. C. MacNaughton, Teachers Registration Board |
| | Mr. P. Fleming, Director of College Operations, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. R. Ryan, Professional Assistant to Director General of Further Education |
| | Mr. J. Martin, Superintendent, Training and Development, Department of Further Education |
| | Mr. C. Laubsch, Director Personnel, Education Department |
| | Mr. I. Lang, Superintendent, Personnel Inservice, Education Department |
| 16 November, 1981 | Dr. J. Mayfield, Director, Educational Facilities, Education Department |
| | Mr. T. Sheridan, Deputy Under-Treasurer, Treasury Department |
| | Representatives of the Advisory Committee on Non-Government Schools in South Australia -<br>Bro. J. Marks, Mr. J. MacDonald, Ms. L. Donaldson, Sr. M. Mercer, Mr. M. Hunkin, Mr. R. Leane, Rev. T. Reuter, and Mr. J. Reedman, Secretary |
| | Mrs. E. Kappe, President, Professional Association of Childhood Educators |
| | Mrs. S. Kelly, President, Junior Primary Principals Association |
| | Mrs. T. Cocchiaro, Vice President, Junior Primary Principals Association |
| | Miss P. Kosh, Principal, Madison Park Junior Primary School |
| | Miss V. Laidlaw, Principal, Aberfoyle Park Junior Primary School |
| | Mrs. C. Maxwell, Secretary, Junior Primary Principals Association |
| | Mrs. R. Menzel, President, Junior Primary Teachers Association |

## APPENDIX B

## LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO MADE WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

### Organizations

Aboriginal and Isolated Education Section, Education Department of S.A.
Adelaide C.A.E.- Joan Brewer - Head Librarian
Adelaide College of Further Education
Adelaide College of the Arts and Education
Adelaide Women's Community Health Centre
Adult Literacy Unit (D.F.E.)
Advisory Curriculum Board
Advisory Panel for Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired Children
Advisory Staff, Central Eastern Region
Advisory Teacher Librarians, Education Department of S.A.
Aldinga Primary School
Angle Park Computing Centre
Arbury Park Outdoor School
Area School Principals Association
Assessment Research Sub-Committee, S.A. Education Department, Secondary English Curriculum Committee
Association of Child Care Centres of South Australia Inc.
Australian Association of Early Childhood Educators
Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Australian Institute of Management (S.A. Division)
Australian Marketing Institute
Australian Medical Association Inc.
Australian Pre-School Association
Australian Psychological Society S.A. Branch
Australian Society for Music Education
Balaklava Primary School
Bankers Institute of Australasia
Banksia Park High School Committee
Barmera Primary School Council
Barossa Winemakers Association
Bellevue Heights Primary School, Staff and Principal
Birdwood High School
Blackfriars Priory School

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## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Blair Athol Pre-School Centre
Board of deLissa Institute of Early Childhood Studies
Booleroo Centre High School Council
Border Watch Pty Ltd
Bordertown High School
Broken Hill Associated Smelters Pty Ltd
Burnside Primary School
Burra Community School Council
Burra Pre-School Association
Campbelltown High School Council Inc.
Campbelltown High School Sports Club
Catholic Education Office
Ceduna Area School Council
Central Northern Regional Education Office
Central Western Region, Senior Offices
Chamber of Commerce and Industry S.A. Inc.
Charleston School Council
Child, Adolescent and Family Health Service Interim Directorate
Childhood Services Council
Choice and Diversity Steering Committee
Clapham Primary School
Commercial Teachers Association of S.A. Inc.
Contemporary Art Society of S.A.
Coomandook Area School
Corporation of the City of Tea Tree Gully
Cowandilla Primary School
Croydon Park C.F.E., Resources Committee
Curriculum Development Centre Canberra
Department for Community Welfare
Department of Agriculture
Department of Continuing Education
Department of Correctional Services
Department of Education Adelaide University
Department of Further Education
Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment
Department of Local Government
Department of Public Service Board
Department of Services and Supply

## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Department of Transport, Recreation and Sport Division

Deputy Principals' Association

Development Education Group

District Council of Mount Gambier

District Council of Port MacDonnell

Early Childhood Organisation

Early Childhood Section, Education Department of S.A.

Eastern Hills Principals' Association

Education Department of S.A.

Education Department of S.A. Guidance and Special Services (Central Western)

Educational Technology Centre

Elizabeth Community College Council

Elizabeth Community College, Child Care Studies Section

Elizabeth East Primary School

Elizabeth Field Primary School Language Committee

Elizabeth North Primary School Council

Elizabeth South Primary School

Elizabeth West High School

Equal Opportunities Advisory Panel, S.A. Public Service Board

Ernabella Aboriginal School

Ethelton Primary School

Ethnic Schools Assoc. of S.A. Inc.

Eudunda Area School Council

Eyre High School Council

Eyre Peninsula Community College

Eyre Region Principals Executive

Eyre Region Principals and Officers

Family Planning Association of S.A. Inc.

Flinders University of South Australia

Further Education Association

Gawler College of Further Education Council

Geography Teachers Assoc. of S.A.

Gepps Cross Senior Special School Council

Geranium Area School Council

Gladstone High School Council

Glengowrie High School

Goodwood Boys High School Council and Staff

Guidance and Special Services Curriculum Directorate, Education Dept. of S.A.

APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Hartley College of Advanced Education

Hawker Childhood Services Centre

Henley Beach Community Kindergarten Committee

Henry George League

High School Councils Association

History Department, Hartley C.A.E.

Home Economics Programme Committee

Home Economics Teachers Association of S.A.

Hope Valley Primary School Council Inc.

Housewives Association Inc. (S.A. Division)

Hyperactivity Association of S.A. Inc.

Industrial Training Officers Conference

Ingle Farm Central Primary School

Ingle Farm Community Kindergarten Management Committee

Institute of Affiliate Accountants

Institute of Personnel Management of Aust., S.A. Div.

Institute of Vice-Principals (S.A. Colleges of Further Education)

Institution of Engineers of Australia (S.A. Division)

Jamestown High School Council

Jean Bonython Kindergarten Management Committee

Jean Horan Kindergarten

Junior Primary Principals Assoc.

Junior Primary School Parents' Clubs of S.A., Association of

Junior Primary Teachers Association

Junior Primary Teachers, Central Western Region

Kapunda High School/Primary School Council

Kapunda Teachers Association

Kidman Park High School Parents & Friends Association

Kidman Park Primary School

Kindergarten Union

Kindergarten Union Council

Kindergarten Union of S.A., Directors and Teachers

Kingston Area School

Kraft Foods Limited

Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre

Lameroo Area School

Largs North Primary School, Parents and Staff

Lecturers (Resource Centre) Group in DFE

## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Library Association of Australia
Linden Park Primary School Council
Lower South East Link Course Authority
Lucy Morice Free Kindergarten - Parent Management Committee
Lutheran Church (Blanchetown)
Lutheran Church of Australia (S.A.)
Management Committee of Whyalla Region Education Centre
Mansfield Park Primary School
Manu High School
Marriage Guidance Council of South Australia Inc.
Mawson High School Council
Melrose Kindergarten
Melrose School Council
Meningie Area School Council
Metal Industries Association of S.A.
Millicent High School Council
Minda Home Inc.
Minlaton & District Kindergarten Committee
Mitcham Primary School Council
Modbury South Junior Primary School, Staff
Modern Language Teachers Association of S.A.
Montessori Society of S.A. Inc.
Morgan Primary School
Morialta High School Council and Staff
Morphett Vale Primary School Council
Mount Compass Area School
Mount Gambier Hospital Inc.
Murray Bridge Community College of Further Education
Murray Bridge High School
Murray Bridge South Primary School
Music Branch, Education Department S.A.
National Council of Women
National Heart Foundation of Australia (S.A. Division)
Netherlands Organisations in S.A. Inc., Federation of
Nicolson Avenue Junior Primary School, Staff
Norwood Primary School Council
Nurses Board of S.A.
Oakbank Kindergarten

Open College of Further Education
Panorama Community College Council
Para Vista High School Council
Para Vista High School Staff Assoc.
Parafield Gardens High School Council
Penneshaw Special Rural School Council
Pennington Primary School
Playgroup Association of S.A. Inc.
Plympton High School Council
Port Adelaide Community College of Further Education
Port Pirie Community College
Pre-Retirement Association of S.A. Inc.
Pre-School Teachers Association of S.A.
Primary & Junior Primary Principals District 4, Central Northern Region
Primary Principals Association of S.A.
Primary Principals Association, Central Western Region, Education Dept. of S.A.
Primary Principals Association, State Conference Sub-Committee
Primary Teachers Association
Principals of Schools in South East Region
Printing and Allied Trades Employers Federation of Australia (S.A. Division)
Private Commercial Colleges Section, Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Professional Association of Childhood Educators
Professional Committee of the State Services and Development Committee
Professional Organisation of Junior Primary Principals
Prospect, Daws Road and Kilburn Centres
Public Examinations Board
R-7 Language Arts Curriculum Centre, Education Department of S.A.
R-12 Art and Design Advisers Curriculum and Regional Directorates
R-12 Drama Curriculum Committee
Ramco School
Reading Development Centre, Education Dept. of S.A.
Real Estate Institute of S.A. Inc.
Regency Park Community College Council
Registrars Representative Group
Renmark High School Council
Renmark Primary School Council
Renmark West Primary School Council
Research and Planning Directorate Staff Council, Education Department

## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Research Section, Education Department of S.A.

Resource Centre Teachers Assoc.

Ridgehaven Junior Primary and Primary Schools, Staff

Riverland Community College Council

Robe School Council

Royal Australian Nursing Federation (S.A. Branch)

S.A. Association for Multicultural Education

S.A. Association of Councils of Colleges of Further Education

S.A. Association of Occupational Therapists (Paediatric Interest Group)

S.A. Association of School Parents' Clubs Inc.

S.A. Association of State School Organisations

S.A. Automobile Chamber of Commerce

S.A. Board of Advice

S.A. Commission for Catholic Schools

S.A. Correspondence School

S.A. Council for Children's Films and Television Inc.

S.A. Deaf Society Inc.

S.A. Employers Federation

S.A. Health Commission

S.A. Health Commission Psychological Services Group

S.A. High Schools Principals Association

S.A. Housing Trust

S.A. Independent Schools Board

S.A. Institute of Educational Administration

S.A. Institute of Inspectors of Schools

S.A. Institute of Teachers

S.A. Institute of Technology

S.A. School Teachers and School Assistants, Branch, Australian Government Workers Association

S.A. Teaching Housing Authority

S.A. Teacher Registration Board

S.A. Timber Industry Training Committee Inc.

Salisbury College of Advanced Education

Salisbury College of Advanced Education Academic Staff Association

Salisbury College of Advanced Education, Maths. Department

Salisbury North R-12 School

Salisbury North West Community School Council

Salisbury North West Junior Primary School Staff

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## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

School Libraries Branch, Education Department
School Loans Advisory Committee
School of Physics, S.A. Institute of Technology
School to Employment Advisory Council
Seacombe High School Council
Social Development Group, Central Southern Region, Education Dept. of S.A.
Society for Mass Media and Resource Technology
Softwood Holdings Ltd
South East and Pirie Regional Cultural Centre Trusts
South East Community College
South East Region Principals Executive
South East Working Party
South Road School Council
Special Education Unit (Northern Region), Education Dept. of S.A.
Speech Therapists, Guidance & Special Services Branch, Education Dept. of S.A.
Speld (S.A.) Inc.
Springhead School Committee
St. Agnes Community Health Centre
St. Andrews School Inc.
St. Leonards Primary School Council Inc.
St. Peters Women's Community Centre
Status of Women Committee of the U.N.A.A. (S.A. Division)
Stuart High School
Student Counsellors Assoc. of S.A.
Sturt College of Advanced Education Academic Staff Association
Sturt Primary School Council
Swan Reach Area School Council
Tarpeena Primary School Council
Teacher Librarians (R-7) Central Western Regional Education Office,
    Education Dept. of S.A.
Technical Studies Curriculum Committee
Telecom Australia
Tertiary Education Authority of S.A.
Thebarton Primary and Torrensville R-6 Council
Thebarton Primary School, Staff
Torrensville R-6 School Staff

## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Townsend Pre-School for Hearing Impaired and Hearing Children

Treasury Department

Tribal Aboriginal Schools Assoc.

Tumby Bay Area School Council

United Farmers & Stockowners (Farmer Members) Zone 4 on Farm Training Development Committee

United Farmers & Stockowners of S.A.

Vermont High School Staff Association

Warradale Primary School Council

Wasleys Primary School Council

Wattle Park Teachers Centre, Board of Management

Welfare Workers, Student Counsellors & Community Nurses Forum for Tea Tree Gully District

Westbourne Park Primary School

Whyalla C.F.E. Council

Whyalla Special School

Willunga Primary School Council Inc.

Windsor Gardens Community Kindergarten

Wirrabara Primary School

Women's Action Alliance S.A. Branch

Women's Advisory Unit, Education Dept. of S.A.

Women's Studies Planning & Co-ordinating Group, (Dept. of Further Education)

Women's Studies Resource Centre Collective Inc.

Woodville Gardens Pre-School Centre

Woodville High School Council & Staff

Woodville Spastic Centre Special School Council

Woodville Special School Council

Workers Educational Association

Wudinna Area School Council and Staff

Yankalilla Area School

Zion Lutheran Congregation, Swan Reach

### Individuals

Mr J.H. Arbery

Ms J. Armitage and Others

Mr F.W. Barnden

Mr & Mrs Battersby

Ms E.J. Bowles

Dr D.K. Briggs and Dr P.W. O'Brien

# APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Mr R. Browning
Mr M.J. Cherry
Mr R.J. Chirgwin
Mr L. Chittleborough
Ms W.L. Chittleborough
Mr J.A. Clothier
Mr C.G. Cook
Mr J. Cook
Ms M. Corich
Mr R.J. Couch
Mr M.L. Cowling
Mrs P.M. Creed and Mrs V. Hargreaves
Mr G.W. Dare
Mr T. Duncan
Dr F.N. Ebbeck
Mr W.S. Ekins
Mr T.J. Fechner
Ms C.M. Fehlberg
Ms B. Flaum
Mr J. Fletcher
Mr P.W. Foran and Mr M.G. Strathie
Ms H.M. Gallop
Mr A. Gillissen
Mrs J. Glonek
Mr J.F. Haden
Ms L.J. Hanna
Mr B.D. Hannaford
Mr P. Harrison-Mattley
Mr J. Heath
Mrs E.C. Heinrich
Dr N. Hicks
Dr E. Hobson
Mr B.R. Hornung
Mr J.D. Hughes
Dr B. Johnston
Mr P. Jonstone
Mr L.C. Kemp
Mr E. Lasscock and V.A. Lambert

Mrs R.M. Leach
F. Lee
Mr L.G. Lines and Others
Mr D. Little
Mr E. Lowrey and Mr J. Tons
Mrs P.J. Ludlow
Mr E.H. Lyndon
Mr J.M. Main and Others
Mr B.S. Marshall
Dr M.L. Martin
Mr P. Martin
Mr K. Maynard
Dr M. McArthur
Ms D. McCulloch and Others
Mr A. McGuire
Ms L. McLoughlin
Mr P. Micken
R.J. Mierisch
Mr S. Moriarty
Mr D. Munzberg
Mr G. Murray
Mr J.D. Murrie
Mr I.L. Muster
Mr V.J. Nathan
Mr M. Nimon
A. Ninnes
Justice L.T. Olsson
Mr G.G. Partington
Mr M. Penn
Dr G.A. Ramsey
Mr D.B. Rayson
Mr G. Richard Coy
Mr J.P. Rodgers
Mr G. Rogers
Mr R.D. Rosser
Mrs A. Rowe
Mr R.H. Ryan and Mr D.M. Thornton
Mr T. Ryan, Australian Broadcasting Commission
Dr J.A. Sandover

## APPENDIX B (Cont'd)

Ms S.K. Satyanam
Ms E. Scarbraugh
Mr P. Schodde
Mr W.F. Shaw
Mr J.D. Sheppard
Mrs E. Simpson and Others
Mr A. Slater
Mr R.C. Slater
Mr D.G. Snewin
Mr D.L. Speight
Dr C.D. Starrs
Judge I.E. Stevens
Mr A.M. Talbot
Mr J.H. Thompson
Ms J. Ting
Ms C. Venning
Mr D.R. Walker
J.W. Warburton
Mr C. Wegener
Mr G. Wells and Mr C. Vincent
Mrs E. Whitehead
Miss C. Whittaker
Mrs P. Williams
Mrs C. Willing
Dr R. Wiseman
Mr T.K. Wundke and Others
Mr A.D. Young and Others
Mr P. Zanker and Others